

New York Saturday Journal

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 314.

VOCAL REVERIE.

BY HARVEY HOWARD.

"Silence is vocal, if we listen well."

I lie upon the fresh, green grass,
With upturned eyes unto the skies,
To watch the filmy cloudlets pass.
Did some voice say, "The clouds that fly
Above thee, silent in the sky,
Can never know of pain or woe;
Can never utter wail of laughter;
Can fear no ill in a hereafter.
Those swift, big clouds that naught can stay,
Their gloom can darken all the day,
Between the boundless depths of blue
And thee, the path they triumph through
Is fixed mid-way, that thou mayst know
How high is space, and how low?"
Did some voice say, "The clouds are great
As thou art puny, as elate
As thou depressed, disconsolate?"
Or was it that my mood found voice?
Did some tongue bid my soul rejoice
To hear it say, "The clouds so strong,
So swift and massive, move along
To helpless doom. They sink to earth;
And lo! a tiny flower finds birth;
And thou canst breathe its fragrant breath,
Thy hand can crush it unto death!
They sink to earth, and cooling streams
Well up, to bless thy waking dreams.
They sink to earth, and earth is rife
With beautiful, fragrant, unselfish life
To give thee joy. 'Tis over so—
The haughty die, the humble grow.
Sweet blossoms spring where storm-clouds
fall,
And thy life triumphs over all!"

A True Knight:

OR,
TRUST HER NOT.

BY MARGARET LEICESTER.

CHAPTER III.

ALAS! ALAS!

MADemoiselle DE VOUSE entered the house.

As she stood for a moment on the landing outside Mrs. Stanley's room divesting herself with trembling hands of her wraps, and listening with loudly-beating heart to the confused sounds within, she heard the housekeeper and one of the chambermaids who stood on the landing stairs whispering together of a matter which was certainly no concern of theirs.

Some short time previously an uncle of Mrs. Stanley's had left her a splendid legacy of half a million of dollars upon condition that her husband—whose neglect of her he furiously resented—should never be allowed to touch a cent of it.

This bequest was, of course, only an added mill-stone round the poor lady's neck, and as yet she had had no heart either to enjoy her wealth herself or to make arrangements for disposing of it in charities as some of the wiser of her friends advised her to do.

"If anything should happen to her, an' no will made," said the housekeeper was whispering, "the money will go to him after all."

Mademoiselle made a hurried gesture with her hands which startled the whisperers.

Her pretty little face, usually so pale and meek, was crimson now, and her eyes were flashing fire.

"Mon Dieu!" she whispered. "What beasts these English are; they talk of her money while madame dies!"

She opened the door and fitted into Mrs. Stanley's room, a lovely white-robed sylph with the blood-red flowers still in her bosom—no brighter than her blood-red lips, and the crimson girdle still around her dainty waist like a vision of Ukraine of old—the white virgin who fitted through the shadowy land at night, marking to destruction those whom the gods had doomed.

Two or three of the female servants fell back from the bed at her approach, when she bent over the awfully changed figure of her friend and gazed long and earnestly into the death-struck face.

"Alas! Alas! It is too true; she is dying!" faltered the little *Parisienne*, sinking on her knees beside the bed and giving way to a storm of sobs. "Ah, what is to become of poor Coila now? Madame, dear madame, can nothing be done?" she implored, clasping the flaccid hand which hung lifelessly over the bed-side.

Mrs. Stanley slowly turned her ghastly face toward her and gazed at her strangely.

"Nothing can be done," said she, in almost inarticulate accents, and a gleam flickered in her eyes and round her pinched lips, as if she would have smiled in triumph. "I am beyond the reach of friend or enemy now, and your part here is played out."

"*Sainte Vierge!* she raves!" cried mademoiselle whitening, and looking round hurriedly as if to call for aid.

"Compose yourself, Coila," resumed the lady, with difficulty. "I have no time for reproaches, no time for anything but expiation."

"You—your mind wanders!" faltered mademoiselle, her terror increasing at every word. "Are you in very great pain?"

No need for the unhappy lady to answer her in words, for here another frightful spasm seized her and twisted her tortured frame into every attitude which could express physical suffering.

Meanwhile mademoiselle's tears flowed like rain, and burying her lovely little hands in her rich black hair, she implored the bystanders in frenzied accents to alleviate these intolerable pangs which were killing her adored madame.

At last Mrs. Stanley motioned her to come



No one saw the lonely watcher flitting back as silently as a ray of light to the coffin.

close, and she flew to her side, murmuring a shower of sweetest endearments.

"Is George Laurie here?" faltered Mrs. Stanley, striving with her strained and blood-shot eyes to distinguish the occupants of the room. "Monsieur Laurie has not yet arrived," answered mademoiselle. "Ah, what would you wish him? Tell me, I shall bear the message faithfully—faithfully."

"He is not here!" groaned Mrs. Stanley. "Well, perhaps it is for the best—Paul, where are you? I will try to tell you all myself; George will add what I am unable to say."

These words she addressed to Coila, deliriously pressing her hands, then suddenly recognizing her with a wailing cry, added: "Where is my husband? Is there no one to receive my latest breath but you?"

"No one!" wept Coila, covering her hands with kisses.

Mrs. Stanley lay in silence until another spasm seized and tore her as before, and leaving her almost dead. She made haste to utter her last wishes.

And thus it came to pass that her last wishes were received in the ear of the little *Parisienne*.

"George Laurie knows what my resolution was, last night," said she, and it was with difficulty that mademoiselle, though listening with all her might, could understand the almost unintelligible words; "tell him I was too weak to carry it out. Tell him that I solemnly implore him to acquaint my husband with that of my past history which I have hitherto withheld from him. Tell him that there are two packets in my desk, and the one which is tied with black ribbon is to be given my husband to read, by George Laurie, while he tells my story, and then to be buried with me in my coffin. The other packet is my will, and I call you all to witness"—she had raised her voice a little and, supposing herself heard by all in the room, proceeded solemnly—"I call you all to witness that the will which I have made bequeathing my property to a certain person, embodies my real wishes and that I desire it to be carried out."

"What does she say? Is she speaking to us?" cried two or three, pressing forward.

Mademoiselle turned round, earnestly waving them back.

"I cannot tell what she says. Retire—retire, I pray you!" said she, looking very white and scared; "I think she whispers of family matters which none should overhear but monsieur, her husband."

In the deep silence which followed, Mrs. Stanley averted her face and, folding her hands on her breast, moved her lips voicelessly as if she prayed.

Suddenly the door opened, and Paul Stanley hurried in, accompanied by the doctor. The latter at once proceeded to examine his patient, while mademoiselle, for the first time in her life, ventured to clasp Mr. Stanley's hand and to draw him aside.

"Dear monsieur, how did it happen? Tell me all—I am so frightened," she faltered.

"Laurie has not come, then?" observed Mr. Stanley, in a hard voice, not heeding the inquiry, and he coldly turned toward the bed.

She made another effort, and overcame her shrinking timidity enough to detain him yet longer.

"The servants are saying such strange things," said she, piteously—as indeed they had been—matters between their master and mistress giving them ripe cause for comment now; "they are saying that she drank poison from the hand of monsieur—I beg ten thousand par-

dons, monsieur, but, oh! tell me how to silence them."

The poet was quite master of himself now, and saw the inevitable necessity of taking a safe stand once and for all.

He spent a few minutes in detailing to Mademoiselle De Vouse exactly how the mistake had occurred, and by that time the doctor's examination was over, and his wife was speechless.

"I am too late; I can do nothing for her," said Dr. Talbot, stepping back to give place to the husband. "Her last moments are approaching."

As Stanley bent over his wife, mademoiselle, looking on with painful interest, she made a few feeble efforts to whisper something, but in vain, and great tears gushed from her eyes.

"Rosa," said Paul, faintly, the tragedy of the situation overwhelming him once more, "have you nothing to say to me—nothing?"

She gathered all her poor strength with one last effort, and, rising suddenly, flung herself into his arms, and in the act expired.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEAD WIFE'S TRUST.

COILA DE VOUSE stood at last in her own room, slowly divesting herself of her ball-dress.

The dawn was struggling in through the Venetian blinds, paling the rays of the tapers in the gilded candelabra on either side of the tall Psyche before which she stood with her fastened dress huddled around her, her white arms crossed like a nun's upon her bosom, which gently rose and fell; gazing at the reflection of her two large, dark, pulsating eyes.

"This terrible secret," murmured she, as if she addressed the soul which looked back at her out of the depths of the mirror—"shall I disclose it, or shall I hold it sacred? I have the cue—shall I give it and let the tragedy proceed, or shall I be dumb and let the play break down in harmless confusion? To deliver madame's last message to Monsieur George Laurie would be to give the cue—beware, Coila! This secret which madame wishes disclosed may blench her reputation with her husband—with the world; may turn Monsieur Stanley's already lukewarm feelings toward Monsieur Laurie into furious hate. Beware! beware, Coila! To be dumb, is to lock the whole mystery up in the breasts of Monsieur George Laurie and myself, where it can do no harm to madame's memory, nor to Monsieur George, nor to anybody but poor me, should it be discovered that I have withheld madame's last wishes."

She stopped in her reflections to take off her dress, and to lay it, like a shimmering ghost of her pretty little self, on the sofa. Then she went back to the mirror, looking very small and slight and childlike, and taking a silver-backed comb, began to thrice thrice her long ebony tresses, while she looked at herself with an air of innocent seriousness.

"I wish I knew which course to take," she sighed, still *sotto voce*, watching her crimson lips with some interest as they formed the words. "What would be most noble, most devoted? Ah! I am such a foolish child that I can never reason logically. No! I will put it to the test of chance. Chance shall decide for me. But, what shall be the test? Ah, I know!"

With her head bewitchingly poised on one side, she severed a little tress from the rest, and approached with it close to the light.

"If I find one little gray hair here—and, oh! have I not known sorrow enough to bleach my

hair!—that little gray hair shall say to me, 'Beware to Monsieur George madame's last wishes!' and, miserable me! I shall obey."

She carefully parted the jetty lock, hair by hair, and when the last fell from her slender fingers, she uttered a low, gurgling cry of relief, and clasped her hands noiselessly.

"Destiny says 'be dumb,' and dumb I shall be," said she, giving herself a parting glance ere she fluttered away from the mirror.

She locked her chamber door, and drew the curtains closely across the windows, then she approached on tip-toe a tiny, gilded table, upon which stood an amber, inlaid desk.

"Madame's wishes must be fulfilled," said mademoiselle, demurely, unlocking the desk with a key which she took from a tiny drawer in the side of the desk. "The packet shall be buried with her, but unread—Monsieur Paul Stanley, unread."

Next morning the pretty Frenchwoman was taken, "quite desolated," from the house of affliction to the shelter of Mr. Verne's roof, where Maiblume, her lovely eyes all swollen with grief, welcomed her with streaming tears and hands outstretched in sympathy and welcome. Coila fluttered to her bosom and twined around her neck, faltering, amid a storm of sobs:

"I have lost my friend—my only friend—and the world seems wide and cold to poor Coila. May she rest a little while on this sweet breast until her courage comes back, and she can face her cruel destiny like a true daughter of the De Vouse?"

"Poor child!" murmured Maiblume, who, at nineteen, possessed such a majesty of womanhood that she seemed at the moment like an exquisite mother brooding over this trembling little one; and turning, she cast a glance of the sweetest entreaty upon her father, who stood near, watching the meeting, not unmoved.

The pure light of the winter noonday shone broadly in upon that sumptuous room, with its long reaches of softly-tinted distance, its statues of purest Carrara, its rare paintings in gleaming gilded frames, its gardeners of priceless porcelain, overflowing with richly-odored flowers—shone coldly on the three figures grouped in a remote corner, tears and sighs audible to break the deep hush. Was this the scene of last night's brilliant assembly—of the soft crush and flutter of priceless silk and lace—of the ever-blending and intermingling of the brightest, the gayest, the loveliest beings who graced the great city? Only low sighs for the ripple of laughter and the proud swell of music; falling tears instead of flashing diamonds; loneliness and stillness for the gay and brilliant dance!

"Great heavens, how sudden death is!" exclaimed Mr. Verne, involuntarily, and stepping forward, he took the young girl from Maiblume's arms, and supporting her tenderly to a sofa, seated himself at her side.

"Mrs. Stanley was, you say, your only friend," observed he, gently. "Now let me understand your circumstances fully, as I wish to act a friend's part toward you. I have often heard you say that you are an orphan, and that you were brought up in a convent school. Have you any relatives in France, mademoiselle?"

"Oh, yes," wept mademoiselle, clasping her hands and shuddering. "I have a terrible old aunt, an abbess, who desires me to take the veil, and oh! I am so afraid of her! For you must know, dear friend"—here she lifted her dove-like eyes, swimming in tears, to his face—"I have no vocation for religion, and I dare

not enter the church with such a gay, wicked little heart as mine, always filled with mirth and pleasure."

"No! no! you shan't take the veil," exclaimed Mr. Verne, fervently. "Proceed, my dear."

"Then I have a horde of fearful cousins," wept mademoiselle, wringing her hands afresh. "Oh! such dashing cavaliers and court-bred dames! who all throw scorn upon poor little me because my mamma was what you call poetess and received money for her efforts; I can't go to them; I would die first!"

"No, no, poor child, you shall not go to them," cried Mr. Verne, still more ardently. "But your guardian—have you no guardian?"

"No, monsieur," said mademoiselle, sadly. "My guardian, papa's friend, died two years ago, leaving me in the care of the Sisters of the Convent of the Holy Cross, St. Omer. There Madame Stanley chanced to see me during her visit to France, the year before last, and was so kind as to love me and ask me to come to the beautiful America and live with her, whenever I was old enough to enter into society. I have money, monsieur; yes, plenty of money, but I have no one to love me, and to give me a home like that which I have lost by the ever-to-be-deplored death of my blessed madame!"

Here the little lady's distress burst forth with such violence that Maiblume, kneeling by her, passed her lovely arms around her and drew her to her shoulder, mingling her tears with hers.

"Father, father!" cried she, looking up with the same sweet entreaty.

"Yes, my darling," said the author, taking one of Coila's tiny hands between his own, and patting it with deep affection. "Now, little girl," said he to Coila, "wipe these tears away and listen to me. Would you like to come and live here, to be Maiblume's sister and my dear charge?"

"Oh, say yes, dear mademoiselle!" cried Maiblume, with a burst of generous sympathy. "We shall both love you so dearly, and cherish you so tenderly that you will never regret having given yourself up to us."

At Mr. Verne's proposition mademoiselle had uttered a faint cry, and had sprung to her feet light as a thistle-down. She now stood with clasped hands and dilated eyes, looking from the one to the other with an expression half frightened, half-rapturous, and wholly bewitching. At last her bosom began to heave, a wave of feeling swept over her innocent little blossom of a face, and, while large tears gushed from her passion-darkened eyes, she cried, in the faintest, most musical, and tremulous voice imaginable:

"Oh, Blessed Mother, dost thou see, dost thou hear?" She sunk to her knees before the father and daughter, addressing them thus: "Friends, I cannot thank you; this cold language of yours has no words passionate enough. Friends, I can only live for you, calling down upon your dear heads every hour of every day the blessing of the orphan, of the stranger, of the heart-broken and helpless."

Here, with a burst of emotion, she rose and threw herself into their arms.

George Laurie, Mr. Verne's secretary, sat at his desk in his employer's study, busily copying manuscript, while the scene just described was going on in the drawing-room. Sometimes he laid down his pen, and leaning his head upon his hand, would fall into profound and serious reverie, which he would anon shake off, and start up to pace the room with hurried steps, his brows knitted and his eyes fixed on vacancy.

"Did she confess all last night?" muttered he, at length. "Or did her courage fail her once more? Good heavens, what a shocking occurrence! Poisoned! and by his own hand! Oh, it is possible that she made her confession, and that this is the result of it." He came to a dead halt, looking out upon the frozen street and the streams of passengers muffled in furs and velvets, with unseeing eyes, then clenched his hands and stamped impatiently. "What a young idiot I am!" he exclaimed. "Who but an idiot would weave this tragedy out of a tissue of circumstances such as these? No! The idea is preposterous! And her own servants say that she assured them as long as she had strength, that her husband gave her the poison by mistake. Well, I shall know all in time. When the will is read we shall see whether Mr. Stanley was in possession of its contents beforehand or not."

He went back to his desk with a resolute air, and applied himself to his work again, but soon threw it aside to run his fingers restlessly through his hair, and to resume his reflections.

"What an unfortunate thing that I should be mixed up in all this! For all the assistance I have been to her I might as well have been left out of the scrape. Still, if she has only told the truth, at last, and if no guilt has come of it, I ought not selfishly to reject the part which was thrown upon me to play. And the poor lady did seem sometimes to take comfort from the thought that I knew the worst, and encouraged her to do right. Well, well; I shall soon know all, and so, alas! I fear, will the scolding and flouting world! Poor Rosa Stanley! I pity you dead more than I ever pitied you alive, for you go to the grave with the stain of shame fresh upon your name, whereas you might have lived it down, and been the happier and the better for it!"

He took up his pen with a heavy sigh, nor laid it down again until Mr. Verne entered, when the day's work went on as usual.

George lived in the house, and was held in high esteem alike by the author and his lovely

daughter, both for the sterling faith and honor of his character, and its guileless transparency. Indeed, no one who knew George Laurie, and himself possessed an honorable and upright nature, could long withhold from him esteem and affection; while his frank, boyish good-spirits, and graceful, gentlemanly manner, recommended him to the favor of the ladies.

And yet, George Laurie was no stately hero of romance, conqueror of fortune and of hearts, but only a single-hearted gentleman, intent on making his way in the world through the straight and narrow path of unsullied integrity.

The night preceding the day appointed for Mrs. Stanley's funeral was spent by the devout little Frenchwoman on her knees, in prayer, beside the corpse of her idolized madame. No persuasions of Maiblume's could induce her to forego this melancholy vigil, nor would she permit a solitary attendant to bear her company. Indeed, they were all so accustomed to the clinging and timid manners of the convent-bred girl, that she astonished everybody by her devotion and fortitude on this occasion.

Behold her, then, in the pure white dress which was her almost invariable attire, kneeling in that black-draped chamber beside the casket which held the remains of the once brilliant and beautiful Rosa Stanley. Flowers everywhere, wreathing the shrouded mirrors, gawking the empty bed, heaped in heavy profusion upon the still form in the narrow, glistening white couch in which it was to sleep forever. But no flower among them all, with sheerest petals of transparent snow, could vie with Coila in her drooping grace and purity!

Often they passed by the half-open door softly that they might not disturb her, and looking in, they always saw her kneeling there, motionless, her hands crossed upon her bosom, her death-white face upturned toward heaven, and her long, black hair—a sable shroud—half enfolding her slight, shimmering figure, while the tapers shed their soft luster upon the still scene, and not a breath was heard.

But no one was in corridor or neighboring saloon when, at last, the tiny figure rose, softly, noiselessly as a wreath from shadowy stream, and gliding to the door, listened, finger on lip and dark eyes growing wild and wide. No one saw the lonely watcher flitting back as silently as a ray of light to the coffin; bending over the dead face in its fixed and stony pallor; slipping her small hands along the silver-studded edge, while her own face whitened to a ghastly likeness of that of the dead; slipping her small hands down the satin, and starting and uttering an involuntary cry when they came in contact with the rigid shoulders and marble arms within, running her trembling fingers along the edge of the lining in the bottom of the coffin, pausing with one hand on a place almost under the pillow, then, snatching a tiny case from her pocket, flashing out a pair of scissors, looking round toward the door with blanched face, black eyes and bated breath; then back to the coffin, ripping the lining where it met between the bottom and the side, holding the scissors in her clenched teeth while she drew from her bosom a small square packet, passing it through the slit and along the bottom of the coffin till it lay right under the dead lady's head; folding in the ragged edges of the slit, arranging the delicate lace of the pillow over the place, scattering a few white flowers over all, and stepping back with a low, shuddering hiss!

The scissors returned to the case, the case to her pocket, no one saw the gentle child throw up her clasped hands, nor heard her cry out in a burst of unguaranteed emotion: "Grand Dieu! I have done it for the best—I have saved my friend!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 313.)

DAISY BELL.

BY JOHNNIE DABB.

Yes, yes, my songs are joyful and gay,
And my voice is happy and free,
And bright as the birds on a summer day
Are the songs I sing for thee.

But down in my heart there's a deeper swell,
'Tis the song of love for my "Daisy Bell."
Yes, yes, the stories are bright and fair
That I whisper soft and low,
As I twine my hair in your flowing hair,
On your shoulders white as snow,
But my heart can sweeter story tell,
The story of love for my "Daisy Bell."

There's a sad, sad strain in my song to night,
Though the notes are bright and gay,
That I sing 'neath the softly-falling light—
For Daisy has passed away:
There's a grief in my heart I ne'er can tell,
When I think of my lost love, "Daisy Bell."

FERGUS FEARNIGHT; OR, Our New York Boys.

A STORY OF THE BY-WAYS AND THOROUGHFARES.

BY GEORGE L. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "FALSE FACES," "BOY, THE
RECKLESS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV—CONTINUED.

"Are all your meetings as quiet as this one?" inquired Clinton, as they gained the sidewalk. In answer to this question Ping Loo contrived to inform them with some difficulty, owing to his imperfect knowledge of our language, that no music was to be heard at the regular meetings held at weekly intervals, but twice a year a great festival occurred, at which the worshippers indulge in chants, accompanied by instrumental music, made with an instrument resembling a flute or clarinet, which is the national musical instrument of China.

While Ping Loo was giving them this explanation, and tooting on the fore-finger of his right hand, to illustrate the flute, a couple of his countrymen came along, on their way to the Joss-house, and stopped to speak with him. They had procured new pocket images which they produced for his inspection, and they permitted the boys to look at them at the request of Ping Loo, and they were surprised to hear that they had been manufactured in New York.

These images, never more than three or four inches in length, are quaintly and curiously fashioned. Some represent human figures with bird or animal heads, and are very ugly-looking, while others are very handsomely carved, as the boys had seen.

The larger number of these miniature idols are brought from China, but many are of American manufacture. It is not a rare thing for a Chinaman to call upon a wood-carver and leave an order for an idol. He borrows an image from a brother Celestial, which he leaves with the carver for a pattern, and so secures one for himself.

Ordinary pocket idols are worth about one dollar, but of course the devotee may be as extravagant as he wishes and his means will permit; but ten or fifteen dollars will buy the best idol in the market.

While our boys and the Celestials thus stood in a group together, Rowdy Rube, Johnny, the Chicken, and Ragged Terry came along on the other side of the street and perceived them.

"Only twig Ferg Fearnight!" cried Rowdy Rube.

"And there's that swell with him," said the Chicken. "Go and muddy his boots, Terry, so I can get a chance to black them."

"Hold your horses!" interposed Rowdy Rube. "I know a dodge worth two of that. I'm down on Ferg for the clip he gave me, and I'd like to get even with him. Say, Terry, I'll give you two cents if you'll slip over there, and tie the pigtail of one of those Chinese together. You're so little they won't see you. Here's a string."

He took a strong piece of twine from his pocket. Terry grinned; he was decidedly fond of mischief.

"Money down," he said, extending one diminutive hand, that was as dirty and as dingy as a monkey's paw. "No trust up this street!" "You're too cute!" answered Rowdy Rube; and he gave him the pennies and the piece of twine.

Ragged Terry crossed the street nimbly, and creeping slyly up to the backs of the Chinamen, securely fastened their long queues together. Then he walked around them and began to beg of Clinton Stuyvesant.

Rowdy Rube and the Chicken remained on the opposite sidewalk and chuckled in anticipation of the sport that was to come.

"Please help a poor hophorn!" whined Terry, extending his dirty paw to Clinton.

The aristocratic youth regarded him in surprise. "Hallo! where did this animated rag-bag spring from?" he exclaimed.

"It's Ragged Terry!" cried Fergus. "Be off with you!"

He raised his foot to kick, but Ragged Terry skipped nimbly away, and applied his thumb to his nose mockingly.

"Yer didn't come it!" he piped.

The two Chinamen started to go, and each felt a vigorous tug at his cherished queue.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PEANUT-STAND.

"OUGH! Ough!" shrieked both the Chinamen at the same moment.

"Lete me go!"

"Youee letee mee goee!"

Ping Loo went to their assistance, but he had to take his knife and cut the string to release them.

Rowdy Rube and the Chicken danced a jig delightedly on the opposite sidewalk.

"He did it!" cried Fergus.

"What, that ragged imp?"

"Yes."

"I'll pull his ears for it!"

Clinton made a rush for Terry, and Rowdy Rube and the Chicken darted up an alley-way and disappeared.

Clinton did not find the task of catching Ragged Terry as easy a one as he had anticipated. That diminutive youth dodged and doubled with an agility that was surprising; but Clinton's mettle was up, and he determined to capture him.

At last he closed in upon him, extended his hand to grasp him, when Terry ducked suddenly down on all fours and Clinton sprawled over him, falling at full length on the sidewalk, in an awkward and decidedly mortifying manner.

When Terry rose to his feet Fergus had him by the collar of his ragged coat.

"I've got you, you little scamp!" he cried.

"Oh—oh—o-h-h!" howled Terry; and then, with a sudden twist of his lithe body, he emerged from the coat, leaving it in Fergus' hand.

"If you've got him, hold him tight!" exclaimed Clinton, struggling up to his feet in a crestfallen manner. "Blast the little beast; he gave me an awkward spill!"

But the "little beast" darted across the street and jumped down an open cellar door, disappearing with a celerity that was almost magical.

"Well, that beats me!" cried Clinton.

Fergus looked rather foolish, standing with the ragged coat in his hand.

"And me, too!" he answered. "We can't catch him now."

"It looks very much like it. He has dived into his hole like a fox escaping from the hounds. Are you going to take that coat home as a trophy?"

"Faugh! I should say not. It's as filthy as a fish-basket. I'll drop it here. He'll come for it when we are gone."

Fergus threw the coat down.

"Where shall we go now?" he asked.

"Let's go up to the corner and see how Fieda's trade is at her stand to-day."

"All right."

They walked away, and as the curve in the street hid them from watchful eyes, forth from their hiding-places came Rowdy Rube, the Chicken and Ragged Terry.

Terry darted swiftly across the street, anxious to regain his ragged garment, but as he picked it up, he saw something lying under it that made his little eyes bulge from his head like a lobster's.

"Oh, crickey!" he piped, shrilly.

"Halves!" cried Rowdy Rube, who came up at that moment.

"Thirde yer mane!" exclaimed the Chicken, close following at Rowdy Rube's heels. "Yer can just count me in, my covies!"

Ragged Terry clutched his prize covetously, and appeared to have a decided objection to any division. The two larger boys were one on each side of him, and watching him narrowly.

"If yer attempt to cut with it, I'll murder yer!" cried Rowdy Rube, savagely.

"And I'll put an existence to yer life!" added the Chicken, impressively.

Ragged Terry felt his weakness, but he was very loth to relinquish any portion of the prize he had so unexpectedly found.

"Tain't nuffin' much," he whined.

"None o' yer gammoon—I seed it!" cried Rowdy Rube.

"Don't yer lie to us, Terry," admonished the Chicken. "Fork over, or ye'll smell of that."

He held his clenched fist disagreeably near Terry's nose in a threatening manner.

"Come up the alley, and we'll divvy," said Rowdy Rube, clutching Ragged Terry by his right shoulder with a tenacious grip.

"We'll do the square thing by yer," added the Chicken, fastening in a like manner upon Terry's left shoulder.

Terry resigned himself to his fate, conscious that it was inevitable, and was led like a lamb to the slaughter.

Leaving the young rascals to make a division of their prize, we will return to Fergus and Clinton.

By this time they had reached the peanut-stand on the corner of Baxter and Grand streets. It was rather a primitive affair, con-

sisting merely of a common old pine table, and a chair without any back. But Fieda had covered the table with nice white paper, and her wares were temptingly displayed in some quaint dishes—the remnants of a peculiar set which her mother had possessed in more prosperous days, and which she had spared Fieda for this purpose.

"How's trade?" inquired Clinton, as they paused before the stand.

"Tolerably brisk," replied Fieda, smiling in a manner that displayed her teeth to good advantage.

"As pretty as a picture, and as smart as a steel trap," Clinton thought, as he said, merrily: "I must patronize you a little, Miss Fieda, just to help along the trade, you know."

He put his hand in his pocket to extract his portemonnaie.

"Jumping Jupiter!" he ejaculated. "It's gone!"

This exclamation startled Fergus.

"What's gone?" he asked.

"My portemonnaie. Do you think any of those ragged scamps picked my pocket?"

Fergus shook his head dissentingly.

"No," he answered; "they couldn't do that. There was only Ragged Terry, and he wasn't near you but a moment. I saw Rowdy Rube and the Chicken on the other side of the street, but they cut as soon as the Chinamen began to holler."

"I must have dropped it from my pocket when I fell over that little ragamuffin."

"So you must."

"Run right back and look for it," cried Fieda, sympathetically. "You may find it."

"That's doubtful!" exclaimed Clinton, with a shake of the head. "I don't think anything in the shape of money would lay loose around this neighborhood for any length of time."

"You bet it wouldn't!" corroborated Fergus.

"But there's no harm in trying," insisted Fieda. "Do go back; you may find it after all."

"Well, there's nothing like trying, as you say; so come along, Fergus. We'll take a look for it, anyway."

The boys hurried back to the scene of their encounter with Ragged Terry, but they did not find the pocket-book, nor see anything of Ragged Terry, Rowdy Rube, or the Chicken.

"That fifty dollars has gone up!" remarked Clinton, in a very unconcerned manner.

Fergus looked grieved.

"It's a lot of money to lose," he rejoined.

"Pooh! that's nothing. I'll make the governor pony over some more. I wonder which of the scamps got it?"

"I'll try and find out for you," replied Fergus, quickly. "Perhaps I can get it back for you."

"Ah! you know the hiding-places of these young scallawags?"

"Yes; most of them. They've got a rendezvous, as they call it, under the pier at the foot of Dover street. That's where they carry their swag after one of their thieving expeditions. They don't dare to carry it to their homes, for fear of the police."

"I suppose not. Does this Ragged Terry belong to this gang of thieves?"

"Yes; he and Rowdy Rube and the Chicken, and lots more that live in the Fourth ward. I think if I go down to the den I shall find them there with the money."

"And do you think they would give it up to you?"

"Oh, yes; they're all afraid of me, as I have thrashed about all of them at different times; and, besides, there's two or three that I have got out of scrapes, and they would stand by me."

"Come along then; I'll go with you."

But to Clinton's great surprise Fergus objected to this proposal in a very decided manner.

"No, no!" he replied; "you can't do that. It would be as much as your life is worth for me to take you there."

"How so?"

"They'd think you were a spy, and go for you sure," explained Fergus.

"It won't be for you for you?"

"Oh, no; they know me, and they know I wouldn't give them away to the cops for nothing."

"Who's the cops?"

"The police."

"Ah, yes, I might have known that."

"They wanted me to join them—said they'd make me cap't'n."

"And you couldn't see it?"

"Not much! I don't intend to mix myself up with a set of thieves, if I can help it."

"That's where your head is level, Ferg, my boy! Stick to that. Honesty is the best policy. You'll make something yet, my boy. It won't be my fault if you don't, for I mean to give you a lift in the world."

The tears started to Fergus' eyes at these words, for he had one of those passionate natures which are easily excited.

"I know you do, Clint!" he exclaimed, gratefully; "and I would just die for you—see if I wouldn't!"

Clinton clapped him upon the back in a friendly manner.

"I don't want you to die for me, Ferg, my boy, but to live!" he cried. "Dying isn't on the ticket, not just at present; so you be careful among these young scallawags, and don't get into trouble."

"There'll be no danger to me—they dasen't try to hurt me."

"Don't be too risky about it. Who's their captain now?"

"Rowdy Rube."

"That's a nice name for a small party! Is he a friend of yours?"

"No, he isn't; but he's a big coward."

"How do you know he is?"

"I punched his head the other day, and he hollered good. Fetched him a clip under the chin and he wilted."

"Ha, ha, ha! Good for you, my bully Ferg! You're the best fellow to travel with that I ever fell in with. We'll hitch horses one of these days, and see the world, and knock the spots right out of it. We'll go abroad like Lord Lovel, 'Strange countries for to see.'"

Clinton hummed these last words to the tune of the old song.

"Who was Lord Lovel?" Fergus asked, curiously.

"Lord! didn't you never hear of him?"

"Never."

"Well, I'll tell you all about him some time, but I can't stop now. If you think I'd better not go along with you, I'll be getting home."

"You had better not," replied Fergus. "If I had you along with me I'd never stand a chance for the money, and I don't think I could get into the den; and if I did I wouldn't find anybody there; they'd all mizzle the moment they saw you."

"Shouldn't wonder; then I'll return to the paternal mansion. Well, I'm blest if I've got a red. Say, Ferg, have you got a stray five-cent-piece about your clothes?"

"Yes, here's one," answered Fergus, sur-

prisedly, as he produced it. "Do you want it?"

"Yes; I want to pay my car-fare. I don't care to walk home; that's a little too much pedestrian exercise for my delicate constitution. Can you spare it?"

"Of course I can," rejoined Fergus, quickly, only too proud to serve his friend. "You can have all the money I've got, if you want it."

"But I don't; appreciating your liberality, my bold Ferg, I will content myself with this nickel. I'll come to-morrow to see how you make out in your search for my portemonnaie."

"All right."

"You'll know it, if you are fortunate enough to see it again?"

"I think so."

"I'll tell you how you can make sure of it: my initials, C. D. S., are on it."

"I'll bear that in mind."

"Now I'll be off."

A hearty hand-shake between them, and they parted.

Fergus walked back to Fieda's peanut stand.

"Have you found it?" she inquired, eagerly, the moment she beheld him.

"No," he replied.

"Where's your friend Clint?" was her next inquiry; and she flushed just a little as she made it.

"Gone home."

Fieda breathed a regretful sigh.

"Oh, my! but isn't he a nice young fellow?" she murmured; and she took up a rosy-cheeked apple, and began to polish it energetically with her apron.

"Do you like him?"

"Ever so much!"

"So do I. I mean to be a gentleman when I grow up, same as he'll be. I don't think I was ever cut out for a loafer!"

"I'm sure you were not!" replied Fieda, with emphasis.

"Give me the key to the rooms."

"Sakes alive! what do you want to go there for?" she rejoined, surprisedly.

"I want to put in on my old clothes, and then I'm going to see if I can find Clint's pocket-book for him."

"Why, do you know who has got it?"

"Not for certain; but I think it lies between Ragged Terry, the Chicken, and Rowdy Rube, and I think I can find them, and if they are flush, I shall know what made them so."

"That's a good idea. Here's the key."

"I'll bring it back to you after I change my clothes," said Fergus, as he received it; "and I sha'n't be long about it, either."

He hurried away, and in ten minutes was back with the key, and dressed in the worse clothes he possessed, even worse than those in which I first presented him to the reader.

"Oh! why did you put on that ragged coat?" cried Fieda, as he gave her back the key.

"Because I wanted to look as bad as I could," he answered, smilingly.

"Well, you've succeeded! You look like a beggar!"

"That's the way I want to look. Those coves don't like to see a fellow any better dressed than they are. This will kind of gammon them."

"Where are you going?"

"I'll tell you where I've been when I come back."

"How long are you going to be gone?"

"That's hard telling; but I guess I'll be home to supper," he answered, laughingly, and walked away.

But the period of his absence was more indefinite than he had any idea of. The chapter of accidents is a strange one and Fergus was not blessed with any more foresight than falls to the lot of ordinary mortals. He knew whither he was going, but who could say when he would return?

CHAPTER XVI.

THE YOUNG THIEVES' DEN.

INTENT upon his expedition, and walking swiftly through Chatham street, Fergus suddenly encountered Benedato Gummo, the little Italian fiddler-boy—Ben Gummy.

Ben, with his little fiddle tucked under one arm, was limping along, with a most woebegone expression upon his little yellow face.

Fergus also noticed that his right hand, in which he carried his fiddle-bow, was bandaged with a very dirty strip of cotton cloth.

The little fellow looked so utterly disconsolate that Fergus paused in sympathy.

"Hello, Ben!" he cried.

Ben looked up in a startled manner, but his countenance brightened when he saw who it was that had addressed him.

a man to venture into their amphibious den. Fergus quickly divested himself of his garments as he answered their greeting, and then jumped into the water. He had recognized all that were there: Micky Shea, Archie Quale, Johnny Cregan, Dicky Long, and two brothers, named respectively, Tommy Dugan, and Billy Googan; but Rowdy Rube, Johnny Dugan, the Chicken, and Ragged Terry, were not among the swimmers.

Thinking they might be in the den, Fergus swam between the spiles, and clambered up to it.

The den was formed by nailing cross pieces to the spiles, about two feet below the top, and boards were laid across these, forming a floor. This served them as a receptacle for their stolen goods, as well as a hiding-place.

Fergus found the den unoccupied; the parties he sought were not there. He dropped back into the water again.

"No use fooling round here," he muttered. "I must look somewhere else for them."

He climbed up to the top of the pier, where he found all the boys collected.

"Goin' out, Ferg?" inquired Micky Shea.

"Yes," answered Fergus, beginning to dress himself.

"Why, you hain't been in but a minnit."

"Long enough. I only wanted a dip."

His example appeared to be contagious, for the other boys began to resume their clothes. This was not a lengthy operation, as none of them possessed any superfluous articles of wardrobe.

Presently a loud outcry burst from the lips of Tommy Googan, the youngest boy in the party.

"Somebody's gone through my pockets!" he cried. "You've stole my money, Dicky Long!"

"Yer lie!" retorted Dicky Long, promptly. "Say that ag'in and I'll belt you in the snout!"

"Give me back my money!" whined Tommy, retreating to his brother, who was a much larger and older boy than himself.

"I hain't got it—I've got my— O-h!"

Dicky Long had thrust his hands into his pockets as he spoke, and this sudden break in his words and exclamation was caused by the sudden discovery that they were empty.

"Somebody's been through me!" he added, excitedly.

"And me, too!" howled Micky Shea, Archie Quale, and Johnny Cregan, in a dismal chorus.

Billy Googan pretended that he had also been robbed.

"Don't you know who's done it?" he asked, significantly.

All eyes were turned upon Fergus, and he was not slow to comprehend the implication. He flushed indignantly, and turned quickly upon Micky Shea, an old adversary of his.

"You lying scamp! do you mean to say I stole your money?" he demanded, fiercely.

Micky drew a knife from his pocket, which opened with a spring and displayed a murderous-looking blade, four inches in length.

"Keep off!" he shouted, brandishing the knife. "You've been a-whipping me for some time, whenever you got a chance, and you ain't a-goin' to do it no more. You've belted me in the snout and kicked me, and now if you tech me I'll just rip you up!"

"You just put down your knife, and I'll fight you with my left arm, tie the right behind me," said Fergus, persuasively. "You're the thief that's got the money, and you know it!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 309.)

Vials of Wrath: OR, THE GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "TWO GIRLS' LIVES," "LOVE-
BLIND," "OATH-BOUND," "BARBARA'S
FATE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII. STRICKEN AT THE ALTAR.

THE two weeks that Leslie Verne had appointed as the limit of his patience were gone, except a single day. They had been spent by Ethel in arduous preparations for her marriage, so many little needful duties requiring to be performed that she would delegate to no one.

She had insisted upon following her daily routine as companion, as she was accustomed to; and all of Mrs. Argelyne's and Leslie's combined efforts did not dissuade.

In the evenings of the last week of the prescribed two, Leslie was with her, talking of his plans, purposes and arrangements with a perfectly satisfied way that more than once gave Ethel a strange, pitying pain.

He seemed almost beside himself with happiness; he would look at Ethel for minutes to gether, as if drinking in the sweetness of her grave, wistful face, and kiss her red lips with a passionate ardor that made the girl tremble for his happiness, it so depended on her.

There was about her, although neither Mrs. Argelyne nor Leslie had observed it, a particularly grave thoughtfulness, that lent deeper shadows to her eyes, and made her smile the sweeter, because the rarer. She never mentioned the strange, impalpable dread that had taken vague possession of her. She tried to reason it away on the grounds of her haste in so soon changing her condition, but the reasoning did not suffice. The shadow enshrouded her, and what seemed so curious, she was not unhappy.

She had satisfied herself, beyond a doubt, that she did not love Leslie as well as she ever had loved Frank Havelstock, although the quality of the affection was very different; and she knew, with a quiet positiveness that nothing could have shaken, that she would be such a good wife to her husband as to justify his opinion of her.

Her simple preparations were in waiting readiness that last night of her widowhood. Her bridal dress of soft, silver-gray silk, as neat as wax, with the liss: ruffles at the neck and wrists; her traveling suit, comprising that of a French gray felt, trimmed with garnet velvet, a garnet ostrich plume, and a tiny velvet-breasted humming bird, gray kids, and a quiet gray cloth skirt and polonaise, all lay on the lounge, in readiness for the morrow.

Her trunks were packed, strapped, and labeled, "Mrs. Verne, Meadowbrook." It had been the last task of the evening, and Leslie had insisted upon writing the directions himself and tacking them on.

There were no signs of confusion or bustle or merry-making anywhere in the house; everything, at Ethel's earnest request, went on as usual.

And now the last night had come, when Ethel's home would be under Mrs. Argelyne's roof, and the tears would come to her eyes as she looked around the pleasant room where she had known so much of sorrow, gratitude, joy and pain; and when she prayed that night she prayed as she never had done before for

choicest blessings to follow the steps of her true, tried friend.

The wedding morning dawned in all the perfection of a late winter's day. The sky was cloudless as sapphire, with an air that was balmy without a suggestion of warmth, and cold enough to make one's blood fairly riot in the delight of merely living to inhale it.

Early in the morning Mrs. Argelyne, Ethel and Leslie met in the dining-room, where they were served with coffee, toast, eggs and broiled chicken; after which Ethel made, a leisurely toilet. Mrs. Argelyne gave a few last orders regarding the wedding-breakfast for the ceremony, and Leslie saw that the close clarence would be at the door at the proper time—eleven o'clock—after which he retired to the room known as "Mr. Verne's," and donned his wedding-clothes.

At five minutes of eleven Ethel came down stairs, attired in her dainty dress, that well set off her big dark eyes, her colorless complexion, and glorious golden hair, that she wore in her old way on this occasion, because Leslie had begged her to. And so it slipped and waved from where it was brushed high off her forehead, except a few short, stray tendrils, that curled irregularly over her low, white forehead, 'way down over her shoulders and below her waist.

The filmy lisse roche at her throat was fastened by a spray of white carnations, and over her forehead were two or three more.

She looked surpassingly sweet, and none the less so that she was very quiet and serious. Leslie was awaiting her, and met her at the door with all his heart in his eyes.

"Kiss me, darling—for the last time before—"

He paused, playfully, lifting her chin in his hand, so that he could look down directly in her eyes.

She gave a little exclamation of pain.

"Oh, Leslie, how terrible that sounds! The last! What if it should become literally fulfilled!"

Her eyes were full of horror, her cheeks ghastly, and Leslie looked at her in unfeigned astonishment.

"Why, Ethel, you surprise me beyond expression by your unwonted superstitious dread. Surely, darling, you do not for a moment dream I never shall kiss you again, do you?"

He drew her head to his breast, and kissed her lips tenderly, gently.

"Let me finish the sentence—the last before you are my darling wife. Laugh, Ethel, won't you?"

She smiled at his joyous, careful face; how could she help it?

"That is right. Aunt Helen, we are ready."

Mrs. Argelyne came in in a toilet of black silk and black lace overdress, her India shawl over her arm, and a carriage bonnet of velvet and jet on her gray braids.

"I am ready. Have you your shawl, Ethel, and your cloud for your head?"

Leslie tenderly folded Ethel's Paisley around her shoulders, while Mrs. Argelyne threw the snowy scarf over the golden hair, stealing kisses between from the girl's cool cheeks.

It was just eleven when the unobtrusive bridal party drove from Mrs. Argelyne's residence, and ten minutes past when the single coach drew up in front of St. Ide's—an ivy-covered, solemn-looking place that, even amid the surging tides of fashion and thoughtlessness that flowed continually by its silent walls, bore on every stone the mute sign "sanctuary."

A quiet, solemn place, filled with the "dim, religious light" Ethel so loved and revered, and which struck her with a peculiar awe as she went up the wide aisle, leaning on Leslie's arm.

There were a half-dozen strangers or so scattered among the pews, possibly who had incidentally heard of a wedding, and Mrs. Argelyne involuntarily smiled at the utter absence of anything like pomp or ceremony at Ethel's wedding.

To her, who had attended so many bridal ceremonies, it certainly did seem strange; to Leslie, who only thought of the possessionship the hour would bring him, it was well enough; and to Ethel, the bonny, grave-eyed bride, it was in perfect union with every feeling of her nature. The quiet matter-of-factness, that comparative privacy, were inexpressibly befitting the sadness of the occasion. For a second, as the low, solemn tones of the gray-haired clergyman smote her ears, a dizzy, heart-sick sensation swept over Ethel; it was so strange—so strangely soon to be listening again to her marriage service. It was only such a little while since she had given herself to another, and here she was waiting to respond to the solemn questions that would bind her forever, dissolve the slightest tie that bound her to Frank Havelstock or his memory.

She listened, at first in a dazed sort of way, that dispelled itself into a quiet sort of calmness, as she heard the beautiful words of the service; and when she looked up once, half shyly, in Leslie's face, and saw the perfect love in his face, the tender pride, as if by magic the last strange, vague premonition vanished—vanished under the touch of the hand in which she laid her own, promptly, trustfully, as the words were said in slow, emphatic, solemn way, that made her the wife of Leslie Verne.

With an ardent caress, her husband stooped his head to kiss her.

"At last—little one—little darling, little wife!"

The proud protectiveness in his words, the conscious rightfulness of his kiss and embrace, were very precious to her, and she was happy—as she had dreaded she never would be.

Mrs. Argelyne's eyes were moist with happy tears as she greeted Ethel.

"I need not wish 'may you be happy,' dear. There's no doubt about it—you will be. My boy's wife couldn't fail to be—only love him—it is all he asks."

Ethel caressed the hand that had grasped hers, affectionately.

"You don't know how dearly I do love—my husband."

She glanced timidly at Leslie, who heard her sweet words, saw her shy, blushing pride.

"Thank you," he said, simply, but there was such perfect content in the words that went right to Ethel's heart.

"We will go home now, auntie; my wife and I are ready, if you are."

"I—oh, yes. Your shawl, dear—here it is."

She handed it to Leslie, who laid it over Ethel's shoulders.

"Turn a little while I fasten it—just a little."

Ethel turned—just a little. Turned, so that her back was to the chancel, and her beautiful flushed face toward her husband; turned so that she could see the unbidden guests at her marriage as they went slowly out the door, nodding and conversing in low, curious, gossiping tones; and saw, what neither her husband saw, for his back was to the door, as he fastened her shawl, nor Mrs. Argelyne, who was speaking to the clergyman.

A terrible sight it must have been, for Leslie

gave a sharp cry of alarm at the sudden blanching of her face, the swift relaxing of her figure, that fell as if smitten by a lightning stroke prone at his very feet.

Mrs. Argelyne gave an echo to Leslie's terror, and they essayed to raise her.

"The excitement has made her faint—that is all. Don't look so terrified, Leslie; brides quite frequently faint. She will recover in a moment; fan her."

But the shadow on the young husband's face did not lighten then, nor for many weary days and weeks and months thereafter; he looked anxiously, gloomily at the deathly face, with its ashen lips, its part-closed eyes that looked as if a Medusa head had turned them into their gaze of horror and fear, so strong was their soulless glare.

For several minutes they waited anxiously for the sign of returning life that did not come; and then, as Leslie read in Mrs. Argelyne's face a dawning uneasiness, he became nearly frenzied with fear and sorrow.

"It is not an ordinary faint, aunt Helen—I am sure of it. Feel her hands—they are colder than death and as clammy as a corpse. Oh, aunt Helen, is she dead? My God—is she dead?"

He knelt on the floor beside her, rubbing her limp hands, and kissing her unconscious lips with a frenzied eagerness that seemed enough, of its own sufficiency, to call her absent spirit back. He smoothed her hair off her deathly cold forehead, white as marble, and called on her to speak, for the sake of all the deathless love he bore her.

It was touching—his great agony, his great love, and the clergyman winked hard to keep his tears back.

"Send the footman for Dr. Charlton—"

He began the command just as Dr. Charlton came up the aisle, and Mrs. Argelyne hurriedly replied she had sent at the first.

He felt of Ethel's pulse, of her heart; listened at her chest and at her lips; then frowned, puzzled.

"She is in an unusually deep swoon—that is all, and will revive all right without doubt. There must have been an unusual predisposing cause—have you the least suspicion?"

But no one knew anything of it—except the senseless girl, who had met Frank Havelstock's eyes, as he went out of the church, where Fate had led him, to see his deserted wife married to Leslie Verne.

CHAPTER XLIII.
COMING BACK TO HER SORROW.

It seemed an eternity to the frightened, anguish-stricken husband—the minutes that intervened between the decision of Dr. Charlton and the sharp, sudden resumption of sense and consciousness that came to Ethel as suddenly as they had forsaken her.

They were all standing around her as she lay on the scarlet-cushioned seat, her head pillowed on her shawl and Mrs. Argelyne's.

Leslie stood by her head, eagerly watching the signs of returning life that gave no fore-shadow of its coming; Mrs. Argelyne stood by her feet, as anxious, and alternately looking at Ethel's white face and Dr. Charlton's, as he held the limp wrist in one hand, his watch in the other, while the clergyman, after thoughtfully directing the closing of the doors, stood at a little distance, watchful and silent.

On this group, Ethel opened her eyes, as she gave a little shiver, and a sobbing sigh, with the taking up of the burden again.

Leslie caught her hand eagerly.

"Ethel, darling, don't move or speak! Thank God for a sight of your sweet eyes again!"

She looked up in his face with an expression of intensest dread and fear; then glanced quickly at Mrs. Argelyne's, then at the strange face of the physician, as if expecting yet mortally fearing to see some one else.

"Ethel! do you feel better? do you remember feeling ill or dizzy?"

She only answered by a vaguely painful look in her terrified eyes, that made Leslie's heart sick again in a new, terrible fear.

"Darling, you have been very ill. Won't you whisper to me and say you are better?"

He slipped an arm softly under her neck as he spoke, in a tone of low, tender softness. She essayed to shrink from his encircling arm, with a still deeper look of hunted horror freezing in her eyes.

Leslie felt the shrinking of her slight figure, and drew his arm quietly away.

They waited a second for an answer, then, very gravely, Dr. Charlton seated himself in a chair from the chancel that the clergyman had quietly handed him.

"If you are able, Mrs. Verne, I wish you would answer a few questions. I will not weary you."

She shivered as if doused with ice-water as he spoke her new name the first time she had heard it—oh, horrid cookery!

Dr. Charlton saw the flitting horror cross her face, but he said nothing regarding it, and went on in professional questioning.

"You were well—apparently, in the early part of the day, Mrs. Verne?"

Again that strange tremor trembled perceptibly over her, but she answered him in such a strange, unnatural tone that Mrs. Argelyne and Leslie involuntarily exchanged troubled glances.

"Perfectly well."

It was all she said, and Dr. Charlton nodded slowly.

"You have never had any attacks of heart complaint?—not in the habit of fainting?"

"No."

The doctor knit his brows reflectively.

"I really cannot see what reason there is for the lady's sudden indisposition! There seems no predisposing cause, physically, for the certainly remarkable nervous prostration from which she is suffering. However"—and he rose briskly, cheerfully—"a little care and a few hours' perfect rest will work such wonders that Mrs. Verne will be able to receive all the congratulations due her."

He smiled down in Ethel's tired, pitiful face, as if to inspire her with his views; but she, only to droop her lids wearily over her eyes, and turned her head slightly away.

After the physician had gone, Mrs. Argelyne and Leslie assisted her to arise, and wrapped her in the shawls that seemed incapable of warming her, judging from the continuous shiver she was in.

"Lean on me, little wife; don't be afraid of your slight weight. Lean heavily, dear."

Leslie was so solicitously tender, and Mrs. Argelyne hovered around her, with cheery, hopeful encouragement, as Ethel walked tremblingly down the aisle, leaning on Leslie's arm, yet shrinking from his touch; trying to hasten from the place, yet peering into the corners and before her, with a wild, frightened eyes, as if dreading to go.

They escorted her safely to the carriage, between them, and she was driven rapidly home, sitting beside Leslie in a dazed, silent, helpless way, that nearly drove him wild.

They did not question her; in her condition it was keenest cruelty to attempt such a thing,

but Leslie held her hand in his, in a warm, ardent, gentle pressure that was sympathy itself.

Arrived at home, orders were at once given for blankets and bottles of warm water for Mrs. Verne, in her old room; and between the swift, careful ministrations of Mrs. Argelyne and her housekeeper, Ethel was put to bed in her quiet, darkened room, to obtain the needful repose which should restore her nerves to their proper condition. All through the process of disrobing her of her wedding attire Ethel had spoken but once, unsolicited. She had briefly answered questions, but only this once did she manifest the slightest volition of her own.

It was when Mrs. Argelyne had dismissed the housekeeper, and gently refused Leslie permission to come in; she had covered Ethel closely with the heated blankets, and surrounded her icy feet and limbs with the water bottles, and then knelt beside the low, French bed with a tiny crystal glass containing a well-known and harmless soothing draught.

"Drink this, dear. It will quiet your nerves and help you to fall asleep. I want you to awaken at two, sharp, remember, ready for your journey home."

She smiled as she lifted the glass to Ethel's lips with one hand, and with the other under her head partly raised her so she could swallow it.

Ethel obeyed, unquestioningly; then, when Mrs. Argelyne gently wiped her lips, and bent to kiss her forehead, Ethel looked up at her with her sad, haunting eyes, that Mrs. Argelyne never forgot till the day of her death.

"Will you leave me alone, please?"

She asked it deprecatingly, as if she requested a great favor she had no possible right to.

"Certainly, dear, and I'll put your call-bell on this stand, so if you need any one you will only have to ring. Try to sleep, will you, for my sake, and for your husband's?"

She meant it so lovingly, and as her strongest persuasion, but the great, awful pang of agony it caused in Ethel's heart almost took her breath.

Mrs. Argelyne went quietly out, shutting the door closely after her—and left the wretched woman—not girl, not widow, not wife—to the prey of her thoughts.

CHAPTER XLIV.
A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

If Ethel had received such a terrible blow at sight of the man she supposed was dead and buried, the effect of their *rencontre* had been only less powerful on Havelstock from the fact that he was constantly on the look-out for her, much as he hoped she never would see him.

Although her appearance did not shock him as his must naturally have done her, nevertheless, the position in which he found her, the bride of the man who had been his vanquished rival in earlier days, was not one calculated to cause the most satisfactory sensation. Then, the abruptness with which the affair took place added to the force of the effect; while, over and above all, was the alarming fact that Ethel had seen and recognized him; he knew that, the instant he caught sight of her horrified face, the moment he saw her willowy figure sway and fall.

As he saw Leslie catch her Havelstock turned, with a face as white as chalk, to his companion, with whom he had strolled in St. Ide's from apparently idle curiosity, that had been aroused by hearing a longer at the door remarking to another on the rare beauty of the bride within.

But it was all fate-ordained; Havelstock and Vincé were powerless in the Unseen Hands that pointed their way to the very altar-foot, where Ethel Verne, not bride, nor wife, nor yet a widow, was plighting her troth.

Neither Havelstock nor Vincé had recognized any of the party, the church being large, dim, and the backs of the bridal couple toward them. They had not even seated themselves, but stood, a yard or so from the door, hats in hand, waiting for a glimpse of the graceful, queenly girl who stood with drooping head awaiting the benediction.

There had not been the remotest suspicion in the minds of the fated guests who came unbidden to the marriage, and yet, though neither said a word, or hinted by a conscious act or look, there was an instantaneous suggestion of Havelstock's wronged young wife to both of them, the moment they saw the glorious, golden hair, so like Ethel's own. But then, so many women had yellow hair, and Havelstock glanced half-curiously at the graceful head and shoulders, as any man would have done, merely wondering if the fair face filled the promises the hair and figure seemed to give, and lazily, carelessly waiting for a glimpse of the stranger bride.

Then—the transforming of a casual glance into a stony, staring terror and astonishment; the blanching of his countenance to the pallor of chalk; the suddenly-compressed mouth, and spell-bound manner—all of which were lost on Vincé, who had impatiently turned to leave.

Havelstock's hand falling so heavily on his shoulder made him look at him, and as he caught sight of the haggard, wretched face that was looking at him, an oath of intensest surprise issued from his lips.

"For heaven's sake, man! have you seen a ghost? are you ill—in pain? what's the matter?"

Havelstock was fairly gasping for his breath, and Vincé's alarm seemed by no means unwarranted.

"It's she—it's she, herself—married—mar—"

He jerked out the words as if a spasm of the glottis intervened between every syllable; and in an instant it flashed over Vincé.

"No! by Jupiter, man, if she should see you! hurry out of this, or you're ruined forever."

He cast a glance backward, but failed to see Ethel, as she had that very instant sunk to the floor.

He caught Havelstock's arm, hurried him out, and hailed the first coach he saw, with orders to lose no time in reaching the office.

"I'll meet you as soon as I can; stay at the office, and when I've learned where she lives, and all about it, I'll come to you with the news."

The carriage started off with Havelstock, trembling and agitated as he never had been before, crouching among the cushions, his face gray with fear and pain, his eyes full of a defiance that compared strangely with the uncertain, almost pitiful misery on his countenance.

He strove to regain his composure, but his nerves were too badly shaken to resume their normal condition simply by an exercise of will-power, and finding he was really in a disturbed condition, physically as well as mentally, he drew his pocket-flask and drank a copious draught of clear brandy—enough to have intoxicated him at another time.

It acted as a speedy exhilarant, and he felt new courage as the weakness of his knees ceased, and less craven fear as the exciting liquor rose to his brain.

What did it all mean, anyhow?

He found himself asking the question as he was being driven rapidly along.

Did it mean a discovery of his crime, and a blazoning to all the world his frightful dishonor? Did it mean that Ida Wynne would learn the unenviable position she occupied, or that he himself must pay the penalty of having deliberately broken the laws of the land?

It was an ugly word that stared him relentlessly in the face, then. It had stared at him before, in the vague, dim distance; but now, right beside him, in dancing, red letters, like little grinning imps it faced him—BIGAMY!

The cold sweat broke out on his face in great clammy beads; his teeth chattered, despite his desperate effort to preserve his composure, and when the driver of the coach suddenly drew up in front of his office, he actually shrunk back in the corner, with restlessly defiant eyes, as if all the world was in one grand conspiracy against him. He counted the fare out on the man's palm, and dismissed him; then entered the office and locked the door after him, and lowered the shade.

He threw his hat and cane and gloves on the sofa, and began a nervous promenade, that gradually grew less aimless and rapid as the moments went by and he obtained fuller control of his reasoning powers, that had been temporarily crushed by the blow.

He was realizing to the full that the way of the transgressor was hard; it had come to him that there were thorns along the path, however fair and rose-strewn it appeared.

That was an hour or more of keenest suffering to the man who boasted of having no conscience, who proudly declared he was a law unto himself.

As he paced to and fro, his hands thrust in his pockets, his countenance gradually assuming an expression of ferocity, he glanced at the costly furniture, the elegant and artistic surroundings, that would have satisfied the most critical taste. Then he smiled bitterly.

"I have everything I bargained for; wealth, position, and the influence both bring. I have all the pleasure a man can have, and perfect liberty as to my actions. I am what the world calls 'a success'—but is it worth the price I have paid for it? Does it begin to recompense me for this dread of detection that gnaws me unrelentingly? Will my grand house, my dinners gotten up regardless of expense, that await me in the home many a man envies me for, repay me for the revelations of this morning?"

He ground his teeth as he asked himself the questions; then a sterner tigerish expression glowered in his bold, black eyes.

"I've played with a steady hand for high stakes, and won, and I'll hold the trump card to the last. I'll not yield again to this babyish fear of Ethel's bringing me to my deserts. Let her! let her bring her accusations if she dare, when she learns I'm married again, and I'll answer her with a counter charge. If I have two living wives, assuredly she has two living husbands."

He made a poor attempt at laughing at his solution of the affair; but away down in the depths of his heart he knew he was as foully guilty of crime as Ethel was purely innocent.

He walked to and fro until he was positively fatigued, and then sat moodily down in a large, cushioned chair.

"Such a look as she gave me; it makes my blood curdle to recall it! If I had been a veritable ghost she could not have been so terrified. I wonder what her impressions are! Does she suppose, I wonder, that I am the villain I am, or would she decide there had been some terrible mistake?"

He stretched his legs at full length, and stared at his boots almost challengingly.

"Whether she supposes me a demon or an angel, I know what I think of her—the only woman I ever loved, despite all I have done to hurt her. She is as beautiful as ever, with those wonderful eyes of hers, and by all the powers of darkness, I love her more madly than ever I did!"

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KANSAS KING:

OR,

The Red Right Hand.

BY HON. WM. F. CODY ("BUFFALO BILL"),
AUTHOR OF "DEADLY-EYE."

Over the celebrated *Mauvais Terres* of Wyoming—the "Bad Lands" of the Sioux country—but now known to contain within its bosom a region of almost Arcadian beauty, and rich in gold deposits, Buffalo Bill has roamed, scouted, hunted and prospected until the very Sioux know him as

THE LONG HAIR WITH THE QUICK GUN.

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BEAUTIFUL RUTH RAMSEY, Daughter of the Exploring Train, AND PEARL, THE CHILD OF THE LEDGE-LODGE

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Author, Scout, Hunter and Guide.

Sunshine Papers.

Polychromatics.

I WAS invited into attending a bazaar, at one of our city churches, not long since, where one of the chief attractions was the art gallery. Not one of those art galleries filled with stale jokes, that one may guess by just reading the catalogue, but a *bona fide* gallery of art. The walls were hung with immense cartoons, drawn by a well-known artist and caricaturist, there was the shape of life-sized portraits. There was the poet Swine-burne, Charley Ross, the Fairest of the Fair—though which one of the several dozens of dam-sels engaged in benevolent schemes, as connected with this fair, the portrait was supposed to represent, was a matter open to a score of suppositions—and many other excellent likenesses. But the greatest attraction was the blackboard, upon which the artist, using both hands, drew rapidly, at the same moment, and in an almost incredibly short space of time, distinct and excellent portraits of two distinguished persons. With a swiftly erased line there, or an added one here, the expressions and attitudes of these pictures would be singularly and completely changed. Only a person who has watched for an hour or two the manipulation of crayon in the hands of a good caricaturist can imagine the real fun to be enjoyed at such an entertainment. Nor did the artist confine his chalk photography to delineations of the features of the Funeral Poet, the Powerful Mind, the Veteran Smoker, and such celebrities. An easel heavily sheeted with brown paper was in constant demand, and orders from visitors for their pictures were too numerous for the gentleman to fill them all. Of course, these crayon portraits were rapidly drawn, and though many of them were excellent likenesses, they were all more or less caricatures of the persons they assumed to represent, though the artist himself designated them by the more acceptable term of Polychromatics.

When the attractions of the art gallery had been duly discussed I ventured into other departments of the bazaar, and polychromatics accompanied me. I could not get that

word out of my mind. As I wandered by bowers of flowers and tables of fancy work, listened to gay greetings, and scanned the panorama of faces, polychromatics remained with me.

It is a dreadful sign when one soon wears of bustle and confusion. It portends a decline of the tireless vivacity of perfect youthfulness. But sad as is the deduction to be drawn from the fact, I found myself getting absolutely tired, and seeking a sheltered seat. Such a retreat I discovered, completely embowered between a floral temple and the evergreen arches of the confectionery stand, and was just about to sink into it, with a sigh of relief, when several persons hurried toward me, several hands were extended, and several voices queried all the unimportant little nothings of greeting.

"Have you seen the polychromatics?" I said, as soon as I got the chance to say anything. "No, they had not. What were they? Where were they? Would not I come, too? No! Well, would I be in this same place when they came back to rejoin me? These inquiries having been duly and satisfactorily answered, my friends vanished to behold the marvels of polychromatics, while I, left alone, dropped into a reverie, into which these fragments of conversation intruded themselves.

"Here comes Charley Howard. I'll look to him for a button-hole bouquet. He would not buy any other, for he puts on such airs about not caring in the least for ladies, though all the time he is the most complete coxcomb, thinks every girl who looks at him is in love with him, and any woman upon whom he smiles must never accept a kind word from any other mortal!"

"Oh, Mr. Howard, what a pleasure to see you here. You are deserting your old friends outrageously of late. You are not missed? How can you fish so barefacedly for compliments? No, it is not mere compliment, either, but sincerity, when I affirm that you are missed sadly. You would like some of my pretty flowers? Of course you would! Will you have one of these elegant bouquets for some lady friend? No! Then you will take one of these small ones for yourself. This one will do. I know just your taste—you always choose such exquisite flowers. Thirty cents, if you please."

"Ah! Mr. McGrange! Two of these little bouquets? Well, choose them yourself. Sixty cents high! Why, not in the least! If you were purchasing a bouquet for a lady you would have to pay several dollars, you know."

"How could I say that to him when I knew one was for his girl? Oh! Sue, you are too kind-hearted! I hate to see young fellows so mean. If he wanted to give her flowers at all why did he not buy her a decent bouquet?"

"He only gets a small salary! Well, and if he doesn't, what business has he to wait upon a young lady at all? He is ordinarily sensible, and he must know that girls do not want beaux who cannot show their devotion in free expenditure of money. There now! Here comes Lib Ellis and her lover. He is one who knows how to win a girl's admiration."

"Good evening, Mr. Grandison. Oh! Lib, you darling! It is an age since I have seen you. Why do you not come round oftener? That bouquet is only ten dollars, Mr. Grandison. Exquisite, isn't it, Lib? I know tea-roses are your favorites. You'll take it? How delicious it is to have such friends, Lib."

"What did you say, Sue? You are surprised that Lib Ellis should encourage such a man? Why, my dear Sue, you are too refreshingly green. I know he has not much brains, but he has piles of money, and if one cannot have the two combined, they would be idiots not to choose the money. His temper and reputation! Why, Sue, a woman is a fool who cannot keep on the safe side of a man's temper by a little strategy and a few lies; and as for his reputation, why, reputation doesn't count anything against money in the social world! Lib looks poorly? Well, yes; I think so, too. You see, she was awfully fond of Lee Upright, but she turned him off for Grandison, and perhaps it worries her somewhat; for Lib gave promise, when she graduated, of being one of your thoroughly strong-minded women, to whom social station and wealth counts nowhere beside duty and all that sort of bosh. But, really, Lib has proved herself quite a woman. How she will smile at her youthful sentimentality, and dreams of love and a third-story back, when she lives in her mansion and drives in her phaeton? She may weep! Well, Sue, you are too innocent to live—"

"Oh! back again! and how did you like the polychromatics?" I ask, emerging from my bower.

"You think them true to life than photographs? People are shown in photographs as they appear; in polychromatics as they are?"

Yes, yes. Quite so. I have been studying polychromaticism, and I find it too true."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

PERPLEXITIES.

WE have a great many perplexities to encounter as we journey through this life, and probably not one out of ten can escape them. To some they are of some moment, to others the merest trifles, yet, to all, they seem like mountains and mountains of too great a height ever to be surmounted.

It perplexes many to have company come when they are unprepared to receive them. The extra fine table-cloth must be used, the silver forks put in order, in fact, everything we have to make a fine show of must be put into requisition to let people see that some folks can make as good a show as some other folks. To remedy this perplexity of being unprepared for company I would recommend you to always be prepared.

A lady was quite perplexed because company came while she was at dinner, and the wall she sent forth was something like the following: "I never felt so mortified in all my life. Mrs. Jones came while we were at dinner, and we had a stained cloth on the table and some of the dishes didn't match, and I had on one of my dingiest, most old-fashioned dresses eye ever beheld. What do you suppose she must have thought?"

If she were a woman of sense she must have thought the lady in question thought more of company show than of home attention. I never could nor can imagine why all this parade and fuss is made for "company," who are not one whit better than ourselves, and then live along in a slouchy way ourselves, just as though we were nobodies and company the only ones we should "fix up" for.

Our lives are short, at the best, and we ought to devote as much of our time to our own kith and kin as we do to outsiders, and it perplexes me to know why we don't do so.

It perplexes us to have friends we have thought much of, and done much for, seem callous to our endeavors; to tire of us so soon, and to find only a cold reception where we once received a warm greeting. Half the time we do not know the reason of this change. Do you suppose we are like a book that grows

wearisome as it gets too much read, that some people throw us aside because we seem to them to be stupid, just as we would a stupid book?

It is perplexing to have our schemes turn out contrary to our expectations—that what we have labored so long to achieve proves only a failure—that the bright orb we pursued, with so much vigor, bursts like a fragile, filmy, many-hued soap-bubble. To add to our perplexities comes the aggravating remark of "I told you so," or "I knew how it would be." It seems hard enough to be non-successful without having it thrown in your teeth every half-hour of the day.

Some people are in great perplexity in knowing whom to select for a life-partner, so they write letters to editors concerning this momentous epoch of their lives and scorn to take the advice of those nearer home. The editors generally advise them to the best of their ability, but it always seems to me that when these lovers write concerning their quarrels, the editors only get a one-sided sort of story, and I should think they would find it a perplexing business to know just exactly how to answer these missives. I suppose, however, that editors are so pestered with perplexities that scarcely anything perplexes them.

Many people have numerous calls on them for the loan of money, and are perplexed as to how to frame an excuse for not lending it with out giving offense. I know some people desire to borrow money, and if their request is not complied with, they get quite mad, just as though they had a right to claim other people's money, and so some people let their money slip through their fingers rather than have a fuss made about it. Just as soon as any one makes a little money there come a whole pile of harpies on him to drain him of his wealth, seemingly as if he were too perplexed to know what to do with his funds, and so they have come to teach him and help him to use it, perplexing him to know how to get rid of these human leeches, that bleed him as long as he has a drop of blood in the shape of greenbacks or currency about him.

As life is pretty well made up of annoyances the best we can do is to bear them with as much patience and fortitude as we can command. The day will come when we shall be called away from them all, and I hope none of us will carry our perplexities into the next world, and I don't think any of us will be allowed to do so. I don't want to trouble myself with the concerns of this world after I have left it, and I suppose you hope, from the bottom of your hearts—and I cannot blame you—that my spirit will not be allowed to come back and write more essays. Don't be alarmed! Eve and I will not perplex you when we die. Don't you feel better for that assurance?

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

A Liberal-Minded Man.

I AM one of the most liberal-minded men that ever was accidentally cast upon this earth—or any other.

For liberality and generality I can't be beat—I mean, for liberality and generosity. (I borrowed this pen, and am not responsible for what it writes, anyway.)

I don't care a cent for money. I never bother myself with it—I never have very much to bother with—this pen again!

If I had one million dollars—and I would have it if I had as much as I wanted—I would give it all away before I knew what I was doing.

If people would only stop and think a moment and reflect that money was all nonsense, and burn up what they have got, and get along without it, we would then all be on a common footing, and have no trouble.

I never could keep any of it in my pockets, just because I was so liberal and thought it was a trouble to carry it around.

If a poor man ever came to me with a piteous story of suffering, and I had nothing to give him, I always gave him nothing with the most reckless benevolence—and added something to it.

No book-agent ever came around to me that I did not buy his book or kick him out of the house. I sometimes gave him more than he came for, as he would remark at the corner grocery store afterward.

I never thought very much of money. Other people accumulated it and stored it away, but I always looked upon it as trash and got suddenly rid of all that happened to be forced upon me.

They say the small-pox is circulated around by bills, so I avoid them.

If a poor, starving beggar would come to me, I always pulled out my pocket-book without a word or without a question, and—and showed him there was nothing in it. It isn't every one that will do that. I was always generous enough to send him right to my neighbor, and he would go there gladly.

What is ten cents, I would like to say! Only a dime. You can make nothing more out of it. Then why should people cling to their money so?

What good, I would like to know, does money in your pocket do? And what good does it do to lay it up for you can't take it along with you when you die, unless you get it converted into some payable in gold, with which you can ornament your casket.

If any one ever worked for me I always paid him more than the work was worth. I enjoyed in doing so.

I lately hired a fellow to saw a cord of wood, and when done I gave him a hoop skirt. He objected to it. I told him that that skirt cost four dollars, a year ago, and asked him if it should not be worth more now, with the interest added to it? He said he couldn't rightly see it. I told him he couldn't sit down to make one like it for three times the sum. He said he would rather not take it—that he had no use in the world for it, but I just forced it upon him. He said he had never seen such liberality.

To the man who made a little garden for me last year, worth only two dollars, I gave an overcoat that cost, twenty years ago when clothing was cheap, forty dollars. He said he would have no use for it. I told him before the next winter was over he would have use for several of them, as that was a little thin. He said—to tell the honest truth—he hated to take it from me, and would rather take the money. I absolutely made him take it, because I didn't care for expenses.

When a woman did a little whitewashing in my house lately, I overwhelmed her gratitude by presenting her with a plug hat which was in our family for two generations, and of course was very valuable.

When they came around collecting for the little intelligent African heathen yesterday, I graciously gave them the last cent I had with me. It wasn't a bogus cent, either, but a real good one, payable in candy at any grocery in town.

I never yet stooped to pick up a five-dollar bill on the street. Perhaps I never saw one lying there, but even if I did, I would go by it, then circulate around it a little, and, if I did pick it up, it would be for the express benefit of somebody who was poor.

The money I have given for the benefit of hospitals could not be counted; it was countless.

Poor, hungry tramps, who have applied at my door, always said they got generous board, although they would add that it was a little too thick, and laid on with both hands.

I never gave a man a thrashing that I did not give it to him with the most unbounded liberality; as he would remark to the doctor while he was sewing him together, or mending his head with glue.

I have always considered it far better to give than to receive, so I always gave my note rather than receive another man's; and when I give a note I always let the holder take his own time to collect it; I don't hurry him. Why, in my will—which is written—I have kindly bequeathed all my property to my creditors, and would give more if I had it.

I never was a stingy man, as my neighbor remarked when he threw two dead cats back into my yard the next morning.

A poor, but pious young man came here this morning in search of clothes. I gave him a splendid outfit. The suit fit him, but it was out as much as he could desire. I didn't charge him anything, only not to come again. He promised not to, soon.

I think no more of giving a dollar in charity than I would of giving two fifty-cent pieces. I never did.

If I had all the money now which I have given out for benevolent purposes in the course of a long and eventful life, I wouldn't be wearing these holes in my stock—this pen again!

I mean I wouldn't be wearing these holes in my sleeve, trying to write what a liberal man I am. Why would you believe it, they wanted me to run for President on the Liberal ticket!

Weekly Yours,
WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Topics of the Time.

—Who will say that our morals are not improving when it can be published that although wine is drunk at Washington dinner-tables and junks of punch are brewed when the nights are cold, and the sight of a drunken Congressman is never witnessed nowadays? Half a century ago, travelers who described the Capitol, used to describe the drunkenness there during a session of Congress; and the night sessions were scenes of debauch. But now there are members of Congress who do not even have wine on their dinner-tables, and good old Dr. Chickering, who reorganizes the Congressional temperance society at the commencement of each session, is unusually successful this winter, except among the newly elected, and of these "men from the rural districts" he expects to make exemplary representatives.

—We never did *admire* tobacco, and now that we learn that its cultivation is entailing ignorance among the children of tobacco-growers, we think less of the weed than ever. The Salisbury (Md.) Press states that when the crop is being planted in the spring, the farmer needs all the help he can summon, and the children must stop school to assist. When it comes to re-setting the children can be made useful and must stop school. When the cut-worm, the grass and the weeds begin to eat the children can be made useful and must stop school. When worms begin to come and the suckers begin to grow, the children are needed and must not think of giving a minute of time to their books. When the tobacco has ripened and is ready for the knife, when the pet crop is threatened with frost every child must assist in saving it. When the tobacco is safe in the barn and cured there is no schoolboy or girl too small to help strip it. When the crop is finally on the market it is time to begin preparations for its successor. Thus it is that the culture of tobacco is constantly in the way of the regular attendance of children at school; and as a natural and inevitable result the farmer prospers at the expense of his children, of society and of the State.

—The disciples of Lavater and Spurzheim will tell you that physiognomy and phrenology are infallible tests of character. But

"The best laid plans of mice and men Gang aft a-gley."

as was illustrated at a recent trial: A man entered a crowded court-room one day, and looking eagerly around, asked of a bystander which were the prisoners. A wag, without moving a muscle, pointed to the jury-box, and said: "There they are, in that box!"

"I thought so," said the inquirer in a whisper. "What a lot of gallows-looking wretches they are! There's anything in physiognomy and phrenology, they deserve hanging, anyhow!"

The jury were all "picked men" of that region.

—That the English are not above picking up a good thing is proved by the fact that Sir Charles Reed, Chairman of the London School Board, presided at a spelling-bee between twenty-five ladies and twenty-five gentlemen. Sir Charles remarked that it was a singular fact that educated English people were often deficient in spelling. He hoped to see good results from these matches in England as he had seen in America, and suggested geographical and historical public competitions. We are sorry to know that these "spelling-bees" have been less in vogue with us this past winter than during the previous year. They did great good and ought to be encouraged. Here is a contribution for exercise:

Menageries where sleuth-hounds caracole,
Where avarice phalans and phlegmatic grin
Fright plannings and kestrils cheek by jowl
With pewit and precocious cockatoo.

Gaunt seneschals, in crotchety cockades,
With seine net trawl for porpoise in lagoons;
While scullions gauge erratic escapades
Of madrepores in water-logged galleons.

Flamboyant triptychs grained with gherkins green,
In reckless frays with coquettish braid,
Ecstatic garogles, with grotesque chagrin,
Garnish the gruesome nightmares of my dream!

—The Prince of Wales and some of his suite were allowed to visit the famous "Towers of Silence," where the bodies of the dead are exposed to be devoured by vultures. They were the first Europeans who have ever been permitted to enter the gloomy portals of this strange place of sepulcher. The towers are five in number, are circular, and are so well built that the oldest has stood for two hundred years without requiring to be repaired. They are formed of huge stone slabs well cemented together, and the largest cost \$30,000. If it may be assumed that the four other towers cost on an average \$20,000 each, we should have a tenth of a million invested in these buildings alone. Add that Sir Jamshide gave 100,000 square yards of land, and defrayed the expenses of a road, and some idea may be formed of the cost of the whole cemetery. They are under charge of the Parsee sect, who are noted for their rigid exclusiveness, and it was something of a surprise to the natives as well as foreigners that the permission of disposal of the dead is due no doubt to the veneration with which the Parsees regard the elements. Fire is too pure to be polluted by committing corpses to the flames; water is almost equally venerated, and so is mother earth. Hence this strange custom has been adopted by which it is thought none of the impurities can pollute the elements.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permitted in a postage marked "Buck MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all matters of choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy" third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing of each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by us means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

Correspondents will find replies to queries in the paper issuing three weeks after reception of the inquiry. To reply sooner is impossible.

We accept: "Vocal Reverie;" "Betrothal;" "Response to Doloroso;" "The Enchanted Ring;" "The Court of Death;" "I Am Not With You;" "A Crow's Prophecy;" "Where Meets the Waters, etc.;" "A Lady Rogue."

Declined: "Rise and Fall of Mrs. McSmith;" "The Mystery of Chetwood, etc.;" "Which Did He Love?" "Aunt Hopsy, etc.;" "Fanny's Farewell;" "Speaking Ill and Doing Well;" "Snap Judgment;" "Moses of the Three Balls;" "A Pretext for Love;" "Too Late;" "Dare-devil Dick;" "Boyhood's Days;" "Why?" "Saltstone P.G."

A manuscript from Waunpau, Pa., we refuse to receive, being underpaid (25c.) in postage. If authors will inclose letters in their packages of MSS. they must prepay all at full letter rates or run the risk of its loss, for we will not receive packages on which postage is due.

W. H. M. The author named is about 25 years of age.

GEO. W. C. It takes three weeks from the reception of a question before the answer can be published.—Answered in No. 312.

L. A. B. Don't know of any such drama. Write note of inquiry to R. M. Dewitt, New York.

ALBERT DE S. Address letter to Pension Office, U. S. Treasury Dept., Washington, D. C., and be particular in stating all the facts and in giving dates.

DELLOS M. Always arrange MS. in the order of its reading. It is *slowly* not to place the leaves or sheets in the order of their reading.

OSCAR B. Ventriloquism is a natural, not an acquired gift. Many possess the gift who do not know it. Send to Jesse Haney & Co., N. Y., for their "Guide to Ventriloquism."

NO NAME, Denver, Colorado. Can't make any use of "I'm Weary." Don't Burlington, etc., and see in the contributions submitted no evidence that you can make any success in literature. What you submit is very crude.

T. S. H. Jo Jefferson, the comedian, made his first appearance at Chanfrau's old "National" theater, in New York, Sept. 10th, 1849. He played Jack Rabbottle, in the good old stock drama of Jonathan Bradford. It is the third Jefferson of the race of Jeffersons who have achieved fame "on the boards."

S. S. T. Manistee, Wm. Clark, of Madison, Wis., has the best mile record for skating, viz.: 1.56. Miss Anna Clara Jageris, aged only 17 years, at Detroit, January 25-26th, 1885, skated 20 miles with only thirty minutes rest. She may be called the "champion skater."

BONES. Send to American News Co. for the book mentioned.—Touch the fleshworm with tincture of iodine.—The profusion of modern experiments is very largely overfull, and every year adds to the superfluous count. Learn the trade of practical (mechanical) engineer, or printer.

BERTHA F. Sorry to say your MS. cannot be of use. It is evident you are not accustomed to writing for the press. You will have to acquire a correct knowledge of English composition which you evidently lack. You are yet quite young, we infer. So you have time yet to qualify yourself. Try and do so.

READING ROB. "The Masked Miner," by Dr. Wm. Mason Turner, has long been out of print. Great pressure of matter has prevented its reissue, up to the present time. I have, however, soon gratify those who have so urged its reissue, and all others who desire to read one of the most telling and exciting stories of the times, by its republication in our columns. We are greatly indebted to the gentleman who has kindly offered to publish the advertisement for the numbers of Vol. I, containing it.

CUT-FO. Texan ranches are famous sheep farms. Kansas and Nebraska also both enter largely into the business of sheep-raising. A man engaged in the business will have very little trouble in finding employ. Wages from \$30 to \$50 per month and "board." As should be, the man engaged in the business, a herder may have a flock and yet own no land.

M. B. S. New York island has twenty-two square miles of surface. Since the city "limits" have been made to include all of Westchester county, it now has an area of 1,000 square miles, and a population of 1,000,000.—The city of Paris had no existence in Caesar's time, but after Caesar's conquest the island of the Seine on which "Old Paris" stood, became a Roman station. In the second century the city was walled city, possessed of many elegant structures.—Pianos of the six or eight noted makers are all best. The selection is a matter of taste as to tone, action, outward form, etc.

ANGELINE M. M. says: "A young lady who visits me often, and sometimes stays all night with me, I know very much admires my brother, a young gentleman of twenty-two. I encourage their intimacy, for I like her, and she greatly wishes him to enjoy her society. Do you think there is any harm in me excusing myself and leaving them together when I can't be there? And am I not doing him a great service by informing him how to do so?" Suppose you commence to show a great deal of favor to some other gentleman friend, and mention casually, before your lover, your admiration for the gentleman, and what a good husband you think he would make. Or make an opportunity to remark of some lady friend that you think a certain gentleman has paid her attention long enough, and that she is engaged. If you have a father or brother very much interested in your welfare, it would be well for them to delicately hint to the young lady that if his intentions toward you are serious, it is about time he made them known, otherwise he should not pay you particular attentions, and so deprive you of the chance of receiving the addresses of some other gentleman.

MADGE, Pittsburgh, writes: "A gentleman has been keeping company with me for over three years, and I think it is time he was proposed to. He seems to think a great deal of me, but he is very bashful. I would like to know how to bring him to the proposing point, and to the young lady's great joy by informing him how to do so." Suppose you commence to show a great deal of favor to some other gentleman friend, and mention casually, before your lover, your admiration for the gentleman, and what a good husband you think he would make. Or make an opportunity to remark of some lady friend that you think a certain gentleman has paid her attention long enough, and that she is engaged. If you have a father or brother very much interested in your welfare, it would be well for them to delicately hint to the young lady that if his intentions toward you are serious, it is about time he made them known, otherwise he should not pay you particular attentions, and so deprive you of the chance of receiving the addresses of some other gentleman.

L. R. asks: "Do you believe that it is just for us to accept the humiliating dogma that literary fame in a woman is a blemish, and a proof that the person who enjoys it is morally and intellectually out of the pale of good society?" Does that cultivation of the feminine intellect, which is a condition precedent to the acquisition of that fame necessarily make her unlovely, unamiable and unfeminine, smothering her temper, blunting her delicate sensibilities, and hardening her heart? Has a woman to fear that the pursuit of knowledge in

THE ENCHANTED RING.

An Allegory.

BY RUSTICS.

Hassim Ben Adir trod the forest wild,
Musing in philosophic solitude;
The summer breeze was balmy, fragrant, mild,
The twining boughs the tropic heat exclude.
Some knotty problem corrugates his brow,
And partly to himself he murmurs: "How
Is mortal man to know the wrong from right?
I grope in darkness, seeking for the light;
I would be better if I could,
Yet never do the thing I would.
Oh! for some sure, unerring guide
To lead me on to virtue's side."

A sudden presence fills the forest glade—
His limbs they tremble and his blood it froze;
He gazes at the awful sight dismayed—
A gentle from the gaping earth arose.
He speaks:—"Ben Adir, list to every word;
Thy sighing after knowledge I have heard.
'Twas I who led thy steps to-day within this wood,
To give thee power to know the evil from the good.
Take thou this charmed, potent ring
And thou shalt feel its mystic sting—
Sharp and severe its hidden prong,
When thou dost contemplate a wrong.

"So long as thou shalt choose the path of right,
And upright in thy dealings seek to be,
'Twill bind thy finger painless, smooth and light
As though from any circling band 'twas free;
But sudden, quick and sharp shall be the pain—
From finger-tip unto the very brain,
Its warning dart shall pierce thee through and through.

When thou'rt inclined a wicked thing to do,
And thou shalt feel the lingering smart
Of its concealed mystic dart,
If thou to slight the warning dare—
And do not from the wrong forbear."

Ere he could speak the specter grim had flown,
Had fancy conjured it with magic wand?
Ah, no! for though he stood here all alone,
The ring enchanted glittered on his hand.
Thrice happy Hassim! this auspicious hour
Had given to him the long-wished, God-like
power—
A constant monitor to safely guide
His wavering footsteps where the paths divide—
A warning finger-post, so bright,
To point the path of wrong from right.
With such a guide could he ever fall?
He was but mortal, after all!

Some time he heeded well the warning dart;
Watched o'er his actions with a jealous care;
Strove bravely with his off-rebellious heart,
And sought to make his actions always fair;
But soon the constant warning and the sting
Of the mysterious, enchanted ring
Grew irksome, and a burden, day by day.
Till, fretful of its dart, he cast away
The very thing for which he'd sought,
Impatient of the way it taught.
Rid of its warning sharp and keen,
Relapsed to worse than had been.

Like Hassim, we all have a warning guide:
It we but heed, it will our steps 'twill bring
From error's way to truth and virtue's side;
And conscience is the charmed, enchanted
ring.

Who heeds its prickings will surely choose the right;
'Twill lead us out of darkness into light.
But who like Hassim of the warning tries,
Or reasons that the warning is untrue,
And 'gainst the mentor shuts his heart,
From him the angel will depart.
To all the finer feelings dead,
For from him conscience will have fled.

The Men of '76.

"Old Put."

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

ISRAEL PUTNAM, the typical Yankee farmer, was equally the typical Yankee soldier. Uncultivated, in the sense of having only a meager school education—rude, in the sense of being devoid of all "society" manners—inexperienced, in the sense of having seen almost nothing of the world, he stepped upon the stage in middle life, when he was already the father of a considerable family, to steadily advance from the lowly position of scout and wood-ranger in the Old French War to that of Major-General in the War of Independence. His life thus offers a striking illustration of the fact that "merit will tell in the long run" in this country, where the Old World law of caste lays no prohibition upon talent nor forces genius to stand aside for a privileged class.

Israel, the eleventh child of twelve children, was born at Salem, Mass., January 7th, 1718, of good Puritan stock, and grew to manhood on the paternal farm, a hard-working, efficient, respected son of a thrifty race. His youth was almost wholly devoid of interest. Like all farmers' sons of that day, every week day was a day of toil; economy was driven to the verge of denial; education was deemed wholly immaterial, and to travel beyond the township limits was a rare occurrence. Hence, Israel remained a toiler, until coming "of age" he was legally released from the obligation of service to his father; then, like all young men of his class, he married, and "started for himself," by migrating, in 1740, to the town of Pomfret, Conn. There, having purchased a goodly body of land, he in due time became a well-to-do farmer, and the father of a steadily-growing family of sons and daughters.

The man's indomitable courage rarely was tested in his rather monotonous life; but, annoyed by the depredations of an old she-wolf, on his sheepfold, he and his neighbors tracked the ravenous beast to her den, in a rock-ledge, three miles from the farm, and then occurred an adventure which showed how utterly devoid of fear he was. Every effort to dislodge the wolf from its lair, by means of dogs and fire, having failed, Putnam, against the protests of his neighbors, crept into the den that ran far into the ledge, and shot the brute just as it was about to dash upon him. He dragged the trophy to the light, and his daring act became a theme of remark, even in the Old World, so that when, a few years later, he entered the Colonial service as captain of rangers, he was known as "Old Wolf" Putnam, although he had none of the wolf in his nature, being one of the most kind hearted and good-natured of men.

The old French-English War, known in history as the "Seven Years' War," opened in America by three movements. That of Braddock, at Fort Duquesne, we have described in the paper on Washington. Then on the French forts on Lake Champlain was committed the provincial troops of the New England States. Putnam, without military knowledge or experience, but from his known courage and capacity, was made a captain, and to his company flocked the bravest of the Connecticut young men. This company, under his command, achieved a wonderful reputation. In all the several campaigns against the French along the Lakes and in Canada "Putnam's Rangers" were ever foremost as scouts and spies. They seemed to "take to the woods" by instinct, and were ever the match of the cunning savages in artifice, prowess and endurance, while the French regulars found in the partisan officer a foe so vigilant and brave that he became, in their eyes, a kind of Forest Cid. His feats, and adventures, and most marvelous escapes during the campaigns of 1755-56-57-58, form some of the strangest and most exciting stories of our Colonial history. In August of 1758 he was, for the first time in his life, captured by the enemy, in a reconnaissance of, and fierce fight near, the French post at Ticon-

deroga. The savages treated him with great brutality, and finally prepared to put him to death at the stake, when the French commander, Moland, rescued the prisoner at the very moment when the fire was being lit, greatly to the anger of the Indians. Putnam, then a Major in rank, was sent, in most wretched plight, to Montreal, to be finally exchanged and sent home.

He returned to the campaign of 1759 a Lieutenant-Colonel, and in it added to his now splendid reputation, by numerous acts and services. In that of 1760 he was also active and alert, and was "in at the death" when the last French post—that of Montreal—fell before the victorious English and Colonial forces. That was the end of French rule in Canada. But, the fight was transferred to the West Indies; and, as the Spaniards had coalesced with the French against England, the latter struck at Cuba, in the summer of 1762. Putnam was at the assault of Havana, leading the Connecticut regiments.

In 1764 the celebrated "Stamp Act" of George III. was proclaimed. It aroused intense opposition through all the colonies. Putnam denounced it so openly that he became very offensive to the "loyalists," and especially so as he directed the movement which drove the stamp commissioner from the colony. Putnam's attitude was so defiant that no stamped paper ever was issued in Connecticut.

With the prize money obtained in England for the capture of Havana, several of the officers resolved to found a colony on the Mississippi. Putnam entered into this project, and with others made a journey to where Natchez now stands, and the next year (1767) this colony was started under happy auspices. But, events in the colonies were marching on too rapidly to revolution to promote the scheme, and Putnam, in common with others, began to prepare the people, by organization and military drilling, for the impending struggle.

The news of the bloody doings of the British troops at Lexington, on the ever memorable 19th of April, 1775, flew fast over the country by horseback messengers, tapping their drums as they rode—the concerted signal to rise. Putnam was plowing with a yoke of oxen in the field when the messenger paused and gave the news. Leaving the plow in its furrow, and sending his little son home with the oxen, with orders to tell "the mother," Putnam took his fastest horse and rode away to Cambridge, where he attended the council of war held on the 31st. The Congress sprang up, which two men a warm friendship sprung up, which never for a moment was impaired. "Old Put," ever long, became one of the Commander-in-Chief's most trusted executive officers.

When the British finally evacuated Boston (March 16th, 1776), pressed out by Washington's siege and preparations for assault, Putnam was placed in command in the city, but was soon ordered to assume command of the forces and works around and in New York city, against which, it was evident, the British were to strike.

From that moment to the close of the year 1779 Putnam became one of the central figures in the great war-drama. At points of most danger "Old Put" was placed. In Philadelphia during the peril of the fall of 1776; in New Jersey in January to March, 1777, to watch the British; at Peekskill, to guard the Hudson, in May; and all through the winter of 1778 remaining along the great river as its guardian and trusted keeper. By orders of Washington (January 25th, 1778) Putnam proceeded to construct forts along the Hudson to hold the river against the British advance. He chose the site of West Point, in opposition to the advice of the French engineer, Radier, who, becoming factious, was promptly displaced by Putnam, and the noble Kosciusko given charge of the important constructions. Works arose which, to this day, render West Point a stronghold no vessel can pass, and no army can take.

Among the episodes of adventure which the old hero experienced was one at West Greenwich, Conn. (Horsenecks), one of the patriot outposts, where an American detachment was placed to watch Governor Tryon, who, dashing out from New York, up Long Island sound, made desolate many beautiful towns and places in Connecticut. During one of these raids Putnam, with about 150 men, was caught by Tryon with 1,500 men, on Horseneck lights. After a sharp round of shot from two small guns, Putnam ordered his men to run down the hill and enter a swamp near at hand, where the enemy's cavalry could not pursue. He himself remained, and when the British cavalrymen came up to take him prisoner, he put spurs to his horse and dashed down the steep declivity at headlong speed. It was an exploit so wholly unexpected, and apparently so surely fatal, that the British awaited, breathless, for the end, only to see Old Put riding off over the plain below, wholly unharmed.

During the summer of 1779 the British again strove to obtain possession of the Hudson, with the intention of capturing West Point; so Putnam drew in from his late quarters in Connecticut, and held his forces at a point two miles below the works on the hill, where Washington in person took command. He so added, week by week, to the strength of the position, that Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander, despaired of obtaining by force of arms the coveted prize; and then Benedict Arnold conceived the diabolical plan, afterward attempted, to betray the fortress to the enemy for £20,000 in gold, and a Major-General's commission in the British army.

Putnam visited his family during December, 1779, and on his return, after a few days' stay, was stricken with paralysis, before reaching Hartford. The whole left side was affected, and the once strong man became as helpless in body as a child, though his mind was clear and strong as ever. He never recovered to assume command. He had fought at Pomfret, enjoying comparative health of body though feeble in limb, until May 19th, 1790, when he died, having reached the good age of seventy-two years.

Putnam's name and fame, dear to all patriots, are especially cherished by the State whose regiments he first led to the battles

of Liberty, while his virtues and personal peculiarities are yet the subject of delightful narrative and enjoyable story.

A Terrible Mistake.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH.

IDYL MONTGOMERY, after extinguishing the light in her boudoir, stepped to the window and looked out upon the night. It was a frosty night in February, the ground was covered with a thin coating of very light snow, which the moonbeams, mingling with the glare of the street lamps, made very beautiful. The hour was late, and Idyl would not have tarried a moment at the window had not a human figure across the street attracted her attention.

Directly opposite her home lived her wealthy uncle, David Stagle. He was a bachelor, but lived grandly, with many servants, in the elegant mansion erected by a small portion of his great wealth, and Idyl loved him above all her uncles, for he was so kind to her. The old gentleman had few visitors, and the most of these were business men. He was a sober, methodical person, who, when night came, put the cares of day away, and amused himself in his library until ten o'clock.

That hour had slipped by when Idyl Montgomery looked across the street and saw a figure emerge from her uncle's house.

At first sight there seemed nothing remarkable in this, but it was the face and form of the man that caused her to start, for, as he passed under the lamp before the mansion, she saw and noted both.

"What could he be doing there at this hour?" fell from Idyl's lips, and, not daring to answer herself, she watched the man till he disappeared down the street.

Then she crept, uneasy in mind, into bed, and thought and thought of her uncle's late visitor, till sleep shut her eyes and bore her to dreamland.

In the person who had emerged from the bachelor's home Idyl Montgomery recognized her accepted lover, Walter Clarke. He was a clerk in the bank of which her uncle was president, and bore an enviable reputation, both public and private. But the young girl had lately learned that the relations between clerk and president were not very amicable; in fact, the former had told her that he expected a discharge from the head of the institution. Therefore the girl might wonder at the late visit of clerk to president, and toss uneasily on her couch while thinking of it.

It was quite early the following morning when Idyl was roused by a vigorous thumping on her chamber door. Blushing at the thought that she had for once overslept herself, she rose, and opening the portal, greeted the white face of her father.

"Daughter, something terrible happened last night," he said, in a tone which increased Idyl's fright. "In the house across the way lies your uncle David, murdered in cold blood."

For a moment the girl stared at the speaker as if robbed of the power of speech; but all at once she reeled from him and sunk to the floor in a fainting fit.

Restoratives were at once applied, and she returned slowly to consciousness on her couch. Then the event of the night returned to her with such distinctness that she closed her eyes as if to shut it out; but it would not be driven away.

After while she listened to the particulars of the finding of her murdered uncle, in his library, at daybreak, with his cold face resting on the desk, and a poignard wound in the back.

The murderer had left no traces of identity behind.

The servants had retired early, as was their wont; but there were several who had heard the opening and closing of the library-door shortly after ten o'clock.

This unsatisfactory evidence paled Idyl Montgomery's cheeks, and she thought of the man whom she had seen emerge from the house so late on the tragic night.

What! had her lover entered the mansion and slain the honored president of the Commercial Bank? Did he take the poignard to secure to himself the position which, to his credit be it said, he filled with honor?

The thought tortured Idyl's brain as no thought had ever tortured it before, and all through the dreary February day she expected to hear of his arrest. But, the night came without the expected news, and the young girl was standing alone in the parlor when a well-known rap on the door caused her to start with an expression of pain on her white face.

Walter Clarke was on the step!

Idyl opened the door to him, and fastened her eyes upon him when he stood in the glare of the parlor lamps.

"This is terrible, Idyl," were his first words. "The Commercial has lost its best president, and you one of the kindest relatives."

She never took her eyes from him while he spoke, and there was accusation in her look.

"It is dreadful!" she answered him, slowly.

"When did you hear of it?"

"At an early hour this morning. I was at the breakfast-table, and upon receipt of the intelligence hastened to the scene of the tragedy. He, your uncle, was quite dead; the surgeons say that the dagger struck his heart. But why am I telling you this, Idyl? You have heard it before, and my repetition will afflict you anew. We, as you know, were not on very good terms; but I bore him no ill-will, and I feel that I have lost a benefactor, for your uncle, Idyl, made me all that I am."

A cold smile wreathed her lips, and he shot her a look of perplexity which she met with a question that made him start.

"What were you doing in my uncle's house last night?"

It might have been her manner that paled his cheek, for all color suddenly left it, and he gazed at her for several minutes before he made reply.

"Last night?" he repeated. "I in your uncle's house last night! Why, Idyl, you must have been dreaming."

"Oh, no! my eyes were wide open," she said, with determination. "I do not dream that I see men emerge from houses in the haunted hours of the night. Last night, when I stood at my window and saw you leave uncle's house, I was not dreaming. No! Walter Clarke, I know that I saw you! Tell me, was he dead when you left him in his library? Answer me, in the presence of your God and the woman who has promised to become your wife!"

Her voice was stern, yet full of bitterness; it was evident that the terrible accusation was rending her heart—that all the happiness of her life was going out with her words.

"Idyl, are you mad?" he cried, grasping her arm. "Upon the soul God has given me! I declare that I did not enter or leave your uncle's house last night!"

A deathly stillness followed his last words. Idyl faced him with eyes fastened on his, as though she would look through them and read the secrets of his very heart.

"You have been dreaming, girl," he continued, drawing nearer her, "and oh! what a horrible dream it has been! Come, Idyl, say that you did not see me in the flesh last night, standing on your dear uncle's step."

"I cannot! I cannot!" she cried, slipping from him, and staggering to a sofa, upon which she dropped with a groan of intense agony.

"Leave me, Walter," she continued, with averted face, but with hand waving him back. "For the love of heaven and the adoration of Idyl Montgomery! go! Oh! would to God that I had not drawn the curtains last night!"

For, since then, I have looked into a world of misery; my life has been blighted, and my eyes have cursed its future existence. Oh! go! leave me alone."

He stood in the center of the room, a indescribable horror written on his face; he looked like a madman, and his white lips shook like aspen leaves as he sprang forward and grasped her arm.

"Idyl! Idyl! I am innocent!" he cried. "Tell me that I may have the privilege of proving myself so."

"You shall! only go—leave me!" she cried. "I will keep the terrible secret."

Then she buried her face deeper in the rich upholstery of the sofa, and with a look full of pity and overflowing with agony, he turned on his heel and left the room.

The closing of the door roused her.

"Gone!" she cried, seeing him not in the room. "Walter Clarke, was it for this moment that I was born? You can deceive, and I must keep the secret. My eyes were not closed—I was not dreaming when I saw you stand last on uncle's door-step in the full glare of the gas. How you left him is known but to you and your God; but I must believe that you know more about poor uncle David's terrible taking off than you will tell. Prove yourself innocent, and drive this hell of agony from the breast of the woman who loves you with her whole soul."

She walked across the room with the last sentence falling from her lips, and parted the curtains half mechanically.

The street lamps were burning brilliantly, and the air was full of snowflakes that came airily down, and filled the footprints of pedestrians. Her uncle's house stood out in bold relief, silent now, for its master lay dead in the great library, and the stillness of the grave seemed to enshroud its walls.

"Poor uncle David!" sighed Idyl. "One knows not when the grim monster is to come, nor what shape he will assume."

She paused abruptly, for the front door opened suddenly, and a man stepped out and halted on the step.

He was tall and well built, his body was enveloped in a heavy chinchilla overcoat, and he wore a rimless but costly winter cap on his head. His face—ah! it was the face that drove Idyl from the window with a cry of horror, and made her drop the lace curtains in her fright.

Once before she had seen that man emerge from the house, and he had stood revealed to her as her lover—Walter Clarke.

She could not be mistaken, for he appeared in the cap and coat which had lately vanished with him from the parlor!

All this had transpired in a minute of time, and the young girl returned to the window to see the man re-enter the house and close the door after him.

"God give me strength to face him and discover the truth!" she said. "In the presence of dead uncle David, I will meet him and settle the question of guilt forever."

She threw a shawl over her head, and took a tiny silver-mounted pistol from the marble-topped mantel. It was a present from him, and she hid it beneath the shawl while she crossed the whitened street.

The body of the murdered man lay in the library, which could be reached from the front door without disturbing any other part of the house. The servants, with several exceptions, had retired, and the few who remained up were keeping vigils in the dimly-lighted parlor.

Idyl entered at the front door, on tip-toe, and saw a gleam of light in the library by means of its door, which stood slightly ajar.

She halted in the hall to summon all her courage to the task before her, then opened the portals of the library and crossed the threshold. The gas over the dead bank president's desk was burning dimly, but in its light Idyl descried the outlines of a human figure that seemed to fill the arm-chair of the dead. This figure grew into distinctness while the girl regarded it, and at last she recognized the chinchilla overcoat and the cap.

The man seemed to be hunting for some valuable papers, for his hands were hidden in a drawer at his side; but they were quickly withdrawn when Idyl's voice fell upon his ears.

"Walter Clarke, I've caught you!" she said. The man turned quickly—wheeling in the chair—and showed Idyl a face which was the counterpart of her lover's!

The sight caused her to shrink back, but she did not lose her self-possession.

"Well!" said the man. "What do you want with me?" and with the last word he was rising to his feet.

"Sit down!" commanded the girl, and the pistol flashed from beneath the shawl. "The officers of the law want you."

Cowed by the weapon and the look of determination that flashed in Idyl's eyes, the man dropped into the chair again, and remained there till the police had him in their power.

His presence in the library among the dead man's papers proclaimed him the murderer, and the Italian poignard found on his person forged another link of the chain of guilt.

"I am the man!" he said at last. "David Stagle held valuable papers against our family. I came to him to buy them, but he would not sell. On that night I came again, and found him dozing in the library. Then I struck him, and he died. Last night I came to look for the papers the second time; but that girl saw me and took me prisoner."

When Walter Clarke and Howard Thompson stood side by side they looked like brothers, and many people could not tell the one from the other—the innocent from the guilty. The events of the second night threw Idyl Montgomery on a bed of sickness; but the watchful care of a young man brought her through the crisis, and to him one day she feebly said:

"God has been very good to us, Walter. But for your double's reappearance I might have put you away as a murderer."

He stooped and revealed his love with a kiss. It was her reward, and none greater did she ask.

KNOWLEDGE is proud that he has learned so much; wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

DESPAIR.

BY GEO. LIPSHER.

Those who first cull the virgin flower of love
That lives and blooms in every woman's breast,
Full often in their after-lives do prove
Disloyal to the heart their love had blest—
Unfaithful to the lips their own had pressed.

Time heals most wounds—at best a scar is left,
A souvenir of unforgotten days,
And my sad heart of his fond love bereft,
Is wounded sore, and vainly for rest prays,
For now to Heaven my soul I cannot raise.

For now, alas! an earthly, hopeless love
Enchains my heart, my soul, to blank despair,
And when I pray my thoughts all wayward rove,
How love was life, Ah! me, a sacred crown
More precious than the world's! Oh! vain conceit—
More precious than the Savior's bleeding feet!

"Fray thou no more," the voice of despair saith,
"Thy prayers are vain the smiles of Heaven to win."
Would I were lost in thy blank world, oh, Death!
Ere I had learned that loving was a sin—
Ere love had bid me yield my soul to him.

JACK RABBIT.

The Prairie Sport:

OR,

THE WOLF CHILDREN OF THE LLANO ESTACADO.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S-EYE," "YELLOW-
STONE JACK," "PACIFIC PETE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

BENEATH THE MOUNTAINS.

THE shock of the falling mass of rock was terrible, and for a time the trio, Bestina, Sandoval and Pablo, were fairly stunned, lying as they had been cast, in a heap together. But it was not long before they comprehended the full peril of their situation.

Buried alive in that little den, with no water and only a few ounces of dried meat for food. The prospect was not reassuring.

All was still as death. Not a sound came from without. The air inside was close and stifling, thick-laden with a musty, disagreeable dust. The young men cautiously groped around the entrance; but their faint hopes were quickly crushed. A rat could not have found exit at that point, much less a man.

It was then that their great fear came upon them, and drawing together they covered their faces in silence, afraid to speak lest they should find that each harbored the same dread thought—that they were doomed never to see the light of day again—doomed to drag out the little remnants of their miserable lives in this dark, dismal den, to perish, finally, by starvation.

Don Leon was the first to recover his natural presence of mind. He bade his companions still hope—that Providence would yet befriend them. It may be doubted whether he believed this himself, but he at least spoke as though he did, nor were his words without effect.

"If we only had a light," muttered Pablo. "We will have one. Take things cool, and do as I tell you."

Sandoval plied his flint and steel, while Pablo made a good-sized "spit-ball" of powder, then rolling it in dry powder, wound all up in a sleeve of his Spencer. By means of the tinder, this novel torch was at length ignited, and by its light the whole interior of the little cave was distinctly visible. There was little to see, at first glance.

Pablo had guessed pretty accurately as to its size, save that the roof was considerably higher than he had thought.

Suddenly Rosina grasped Leon's arm, convulsively, pointing upward with trembling hand. A gasping cry broke from the young man's lips, and his hand quivered so as to nearly drop the blazing torch.

And yet—'twas a simple thing to occasion so much excitement. A darker portion of the wall—a black spot. Ah—but they knew that this black spot was a hole—a means of leaving the den which, until then, they had feared was destined to become their tomb.

In another moment Pablo was up the wall, his body half thrust into the hole. All was darkness the most intense. What if the hole ended—the thought sickened him. But with a violent effort at self-control, the young buffalo-hunter raised his voice and shouted aloud. The result was marvelous. The voice seemed multiplied hundreds of times, reverberating in every direction, now dying away in a long, smooth roll, now as suddenly returning, as though somebody had replied to his signal, playing a thousand tricks and antics.

"Thank God!" fervently exclaimed Sandoval, clasping Rosina tightly to his side. "There is a chance for us yet; the mountain is hollow!"

Thanks to his faithful lasso, Don Leon quickly drew Rosina after him, and then with emotions hardly to be described, they gazed wonderingly around them.

They evidently stood upon the verge of an immense subterranean chamber. Above their heads the roof was low, nearly within arm's length, but then it sloped regularly away until lost to their sight. In the light of the falling torch the scene was one of dazzling brilliancy; ten thousand points flashed back the red gleam.

Pablo and Rosina stood enthralled, but Sandoval, as the torch turned closer to his hand, was less enthusiastic, until his anxiously-roving gaze fell upon a little pile of dust-colored objects, which he quickly turned over with his foot. Then his cries are quite as joyful, for he had found ample means for keeping a light, in the bundle of powder-dry fagots.

"Thanks to Our Lady!" he muttered, reverently. "Come, Pablo; make up a bundle of these knots. Our lives depend upon keeping a light."

Each one bearing a lighted torch, the trio, with some misgivings, it must be confessed, slowly started to explore the chamber, pausing now and then to view some unusually brilliant point. Though, as a rule, the walls and ceiling of the long chamber were arched, its general shape not unlike that of a white-tiled "prairie-schooner," in places the outline was broken and irregular, and here the red light of the torches was cast back with unusual brilliancy, the projecting points and spurs of quartz seemingly loaded with precious gems and crystals.

In awe-stricken silence the trio slowly followed the gently winding course of this marvelous gallery. The weird grandeur was oppressive. They seemed to be wandering through some fabled region, now for the first time revealed to mortal gaze.

"Leon," abruptly uttered Pablo, his eyes dilating widely. "Look at this—and here again!" placing a finger upon several deep, discolored spots in the rock wall beside him. "Do you know where we are?"

"I had suspected—but this places it beyond doubt. We are not the first party whose eyes have been dazzled by this sight. This is one vast gold mine—one whose riches are incalculable."

"But the mine is still rich—see the gold! how the spurs glisten! Why, then, is it abandoned—where are the men who worked it, the men who made these marks and scars?" added the young buffalo-hunter, his hand resting upon the seamed and disfigured rock.

"Where? returned to dust. You have heard of the great insurrection—of the time when the tame Indians uprose and flung off the yoke of slavery, when the San Saba Mission and silver mines were destroyed? Doubtless this mine suffered as well, in that dread year, 1758—"

Rosina gave a little shriek, and clung convulsively to Sandoval's arm. The cause of terror was visible.

From out the darkness at their left hand came a faint, misty glow—and irregular, flickering light rising from the ground; and a moment's scrutiny revealed a startling, ghastly sight.

Ranged in a row, lay near a dozen bare, fleshless skeletons. A weird, phosphorescent glow cast every bone into bold relief—caused the limbs to quiver and tremble as though just about to spring into motion—caused the grinning, fleshless jaws to expand into a horrible smile.

The sight would have been a gruesome one to wiser heads than those of our friends; they, ignorant of all beyond the bare details of every-day life, superstitious as all their race are, turned and fled from the spot with the speed of terror, pausing only when their further progress was barred by a rough wall of rock.

Trembling still, they glanced around them, drawing a long breath of relief when assured that the dreaded specters had not pursued them; and replacing the exhausted torch with another, the trio examined their present situation.

The chamber had narrowed to a long, high passage, ending abruptly, as stated. Sandoval's heart beat rapidly as he vainly searched for a continuation of the passage. Had they progressed thus far, only to have their growing hopes shattered—only to find their further progress barred—their tomb still a tomb, though a large one!

From the gloom at one side, Pablo uttered an exclamation. They found him bending over the fragments of what bore the appearance of having been a huge, cumbersome ladder.

"There must be a way of getting out, yonder," the young hunter muttered, excitedly, as he dropped his bundle of fagots.

Rosina covered her eyes with a shudder as her brother, aided by the projecting points and spurs, slowly scaled the perpendicular walls. Fainter and less distinct grew his figure—then vanished from view altogether. For a few minutes their suspense was almost unbearable. With each moment they dreaded lest his body should come dashing down to death at their feet, precipitated from the unknown heights above by a slipping hand or foot, or the giving way of some treacherous point of rock.

"Holy Mother of Mercy—thanks!" The exclamation came devoutly from their lips as a clear, exultant shout from Pablo relieved their fears—a cry that betokened success.

"Throw up the lasso—where you hear my voice. I've found another passage!" added the hunter.

After several trials, the rope was caught by Pablo, and securely fastened. Then, bidding Rosina fear nothing, Leon rapidly scaled the frail ladder, pausing beside Pablo.

Following his instructions, the maiden seated herself in the lowered noose, and was carefully drawn up the shaft. This accomplished, another torch was ignited, and the trio glanced curiously around them.

They were standing upon the verge of what appeared to be quite as large a chamber as the one first discovered. There was the same gleaming of quartz points, reflected in a thousand rays from the red glow of the blazing torch. And in the exultation of revived hope the trio pressed forward, forgetting all about the precious bundle of fagots upon which their very lives depended.

The chamber was crossed. At its further end was a narrow, low tunnel, which, as the only means of leaving the cavern, they entered. Its course was winding and tortuous, at times almost impassable from the debris which had dropped from the roof and sides. It was nearly an hour before they emerged into a smaller chamber. The torch was burning low, and Leon turned to Pablo for a fresh fagot. For a moment they were dumbfounded, but the truth flashed upon them, and Leon volunteered to return for them.

"Be careful—do not stir from this spot," he cautioned them, as he turned and re-entered the tunnel.

The minutes passed drearily enough, in the dark, and seemed hours in length. Then Pablo rose erect, to stretch his limbs. It was an unlucky move for him. Scarce had he taken a dozen steps when the ground seemed to give way beneath his feet. A piercing scream—then a horrible stillness!

CHAPTER XXVI.

A BLACK RECORD.

"I am Ruez Arroyal!" This spoke the chief of the Pawnees, his frame dilating, his voice ringing out deep and sonorous, the fires of undying hatred and lust of vengeance filling his eyes, his long, bony fingers playing nervously with the handle of his scalping-knife.

Felipe Raymon sunk back with a low, gasping cry, his bronzed face turning ashen gray, his eyes filled with a look of absolute terror. His wildest fears were fully confirmed. He knew that his death-doom had been spoken, that the terrible death which, until now, he had believed forever canceled by death, was being presented for payment in full.

His wife, Juanita, was no less deeply affected. She lay back upon the rude pallet of skins like one suddenly bereft of life—only her bosom heaving convulsively as her eyes stared vacantly upon the Mad Chief.

He laughed—cold and chilling—as he noted the effect of his speech. He seemed already tasting his long-deferred vengeance, finding it sweet beyond measure. And after a moment's pause he continued, his voice sounding low and almost musical:

"I see you have not forgotten entirely; and yet—many years have passed since those days, so many that you might well be forgiven for not remembering. It was such a little matter, too—only the dooming to a living death of a poor, friendless devil—no more! You might well have forgotten—not so I. The past is plain enough to me. I take pleasure in recalling it—in living over every little incident and detail of those days. Why? Because I wished to keep the memory fresh until the day of settlement—this day!

"It is an amusing story, too. A high-born, beautiful lady—a handsome, wealthy lover—a poor, soft-hearted devil of a hunter who still believed in human nature, in woman's truth and fidelity—poor devil!"

"Come! the night is before us. You look dull and down-hearted. The story of this poor fool of a hunter will amuse you—perhaps 'twill make you laugh, even."

"He was young and passably good-looking, this fool of a cibolero—a gay, careless devil, fond of his wild, reckless life, contented with little, more than satisfied when, after his long journey into buffalo-land, he could chink one ounce against another. He was skillful and adroit, too, this hunter; he could trail the bull, pluck the cock, handle the lasso, lance and bow with the best. Better for him, perhaps, had he been less skillful."

"It was at the feast of San Marcos. This devil of a hunter was very fortunate. He plucked the cock, bore it safe through the crowd, avoided them all and returned safely to the starting-point, the cock alive and uninjured. He paused before the row of spectators, and I have heard that more than one fair senorita spoke of his looking handsome as a god, this poor devil of a hunter, as he bestrode his gallant bay mustang, his head bared, his eyes almost timidly roving over the beautiful faces so intently watching him."

"He plucked a few feathers from the neck of the gallo, and bound them together with a ribbon taken from his shoulder-knob, riding slowly along the line. He paused—dismounted—knelt bashfully before a fair young lady; his stout hand trembled like a blade of prairie grass as he gently placed the knot in her lap. Not until the chorus of cheers and cries died away did he dare raise his eyes—this poor, silly hunter. Then—*sangre de Cristo!* He saw the bright smile, the flushed cheek, and heard the gently-murmured thanks as the fair senorita fastened the *panache* above her fluttering hair."

"Poor devil! that was glory enough for one day, it would seem. But not so. Night came. At the dance they met again, and were partners. He grew bolder as he listened to her soft voice and flattering words. Until then he had only dared worship—as the earth-worm might adore the sun. How was he to know that she was playing with him—that her kind words were mere empty sounds? Poor devil! he gazed upon the sun until his eyes grew blind, until the burning rays ate down into his very heart. He listened to the music of her voice until it made him drunk. He forgot all—forgot that he was nothing but a miserable cibolero, whose sole fortune was a horse, a bow and his empty hand. He forgot that she was of the *sangre azul*, that her family—the proudest in the land—could trace their descent far beyond Cortez and his conquistadores—forgot that they could buy ten thousand such as he, and still be rich. He forgot all this; only saw the beautiful face, the kind smile, only heard the soft words that did not rebuke his presumption. Was he not a fool, this poor devil of a cibolero?"

"He lived in paradise for over a month, this hunter. He saw the senorita frequently, nearly every day. They had a rendezvous sacred to their love meetings—it was love, pure, honest and sincere, upon his part. *Madre de Dios!* how he loved—worshiped her! And she? Well, 'twas a pleasant enough amusement for her, for a time. He was not ill-looking, there was a rude eloquence in his words that interested her—and his thorough devotion flattered her love of power."

"But then she grew weary of the farce. And while his kisses were still warm upon her lips—even as his strong arms held her clasped to his breast, their hearts beating together, their breath mingling as he urged her to flee with him—even then she formed the plot which was to free her forever from the poor devil and at the same time to afford herself and real lover material for a hearty laugh at the fool's expense."

"It was a cunning plan—one that a colder brain would have been deceived by. She consented to become his—do abandon all for his love, and vowed to follow his fortunes until death severed the tie. But not just then. She must have time. In two more nights—then they would meet to part no more this side of the grave."

"The hour came. Be sure the poor devil was not long behind the moment set. Nor did she keep him waiting. Mother of Mercy! the joy of that moment! when he clasped her in his arms and pressed her warm, ripe lips! Had he only died then, believing in her truth and honesty—but no—his eyes were to be opened wide enough ere that moon waned."

"They heard a footstep. She fled, with a little scream. He turned, only to be stricken down by a treacherous blow from behind. But this devil of a hunter was not one to tamely give up. He rose—he saw that near a dozen armed men surrounded him. Then he did not realize the truth. He believed that the father of his loved one had surprised their secret and was seeking vengeance for the supposed dishonor of his daughter."

"He did not belie his training, this hunter of buffalo. He used his weapons as only a man could. Blood sprinkled the ground freely—not all his own. Three men lay gasping out their last breath of life when he was finally overpowered."

"They dragged him far away, pausing beneath a dead tree. Then the leader spoke. He told the bleeding wretch how he had been deceived—how the fine lady had led him on, storing up his fine speeches to repeat them to her favored lover—of the rare sport they had had in laughing over his folly; and how she had plotted his capture and punishment."

"The punishment? It was a mere trifle—too slight for the enormous sin of which the cibolero had been guilty. His ears were cut off and pinned to the tree. A lasso was noosed around his neck and he was drawn up to the limb, and left to slowly strangle. That was all."

The Mad Chief paused and slowly filled his pipe, his burning eyes fixed upon the pale features of his terror-stricken captives. Then he slowly resumed, his voice sounding cold and more metallic.

"That was the end of this poor devil of a hunter. He died; the better part of him. Yet, when the man who murdered him sought for the body, it was gone. How, no one ever found out. I cannot say. Perhaps the rope broke. Perhaps a passer-by took pity on the cold clay and cut the cord. The next two years are a blank. Then—the body of the hunter returned to life, but with a new heart. He could remember everything up to the moment when the cruel lasso cut short his breath. And remembering, he swore an oath—what that oath was, you can guess."

"He found himself living among the Indians, who looked upon him as great medicine. They watched him close, but finally he stole away and returned to the spot where he died. Here he found those for whom he sought. They were married—they had a child—they were happy, rich, contented."

"From that day his revenge began. The debt was too vast to be wiped out with one stroke. He preferred payment by installments. A strange disease attacked the husband's stock. His cattle died by scores—hundreds. They were poisoned. Then, in the middle of the night, his cattle-sheds, corrals and grain stacks caught fire and were burnt; only one man knew how."

"After this, he was suffered to live in peace for nearly a month. Then his slaves and herdsmen took ill and died, one after another. A curse seemed upon the house. Only one man could have solved the mystery. He alone knew the secret of the poisoned spring."

Another month—then the first-born—the darling of their hearts—disappeared, nor could he be found, despite the long and close search. During this search, the main dwelling and the rest of the building were destroyed by fire. The happy husband and father returned to find only a blackened hearthstone."

"They found a roving place with her father. A week later, when they awoke in the morning, they found, lying beside their bed, the mangled, disfigured remains of their lost child. How it came there, only one man knew."

"And so, month after month, the poor devil of a hunter sipped his revenge. Bit by bit, the new home was made desolate; the riches of the father melted away, even as the son's had before him. The people began to shun them all; whisperings of the curse of God were heard upon every side. And so, little by little, they descended the scale. From being the most wealthy, the family became the poorest, shunned as though they were lepers. Ah! it was a revenge!"

"But even a devil cannot endure everything, and the brain of the avenger gave way once more. For years his mind was a blank. When he recovered, all trace of his victims was lost. He could only learn that they had left those parts, miserably poor, afoot."

"For years he searched, but in vain. Then, when he had begun to despair of ever again finding the trail, he met them face to face in the desert."

"What followed, you, Felipe Raymon, and you, Juanita, his wife, can tell. You remember the poor devil of a hunter—ah! you shudder and cover back! Yes, I—the Mad Chief—I am all that remains of the gallant and once handsome Ruez Arroyal—the man who was mocked, mutilated, and almost murdered to satisfy your vanity and love of power."

"And now—the end is at hand! My cup of vengeance is full—it shall be drained to the very dregs! For long, weary years I have waited—waited and watched for this moment—and now—"

"Mercy—have mercy!" gasped Raymon. "Not for me—I can die—but for her—for my wife and children—"

"Mercy? Yes! mercy such as you and she had upon me—none other! Mercy! Listen—this is the mercy you shall receive—"

A sharp cry resounded from just without the lodge door, and then the skin flap was hurriedly raised and a warrior entered. After a few hasty words he departed, followed by the Mad Chief, leaving the wretched captives alone with their torturing thoughts.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AND FROM THE ENEMY.

THUNDERING, crashing, leaping from point to point, now directly toward the besieged trio, now bounding away at an abrupt tangent, as it struck against some projecting spur—enveloped in a cloud of dust and debris, the heavy bowlders plunged down into the narrow pocket. High above the crash and rumble rose the shrill, exultant yells of the Pawnees; those upon the heights madly toiling to tear the huge bowlders from their resting-place, their comrades gathered around the mouth of the pocket with banded weapons, in readiness to receive the two pale-faces the moment they should be driven from their stronghold."

The peril was one that increased with every moment. The scouts exchanged looks of doubt and indecision. Had they been alone the plans of the Mad Chief would have been fully met; they would have sallied forth, if to death, at least having the satisfaction of falling in the act of striking the enemy, not wholly unavenged."

With scarce a moment's interval came the bowlders, and now, loosened by the frequent heavy shocks, great splinters of the sidewalls began to give way, falling sullenly upon lower and stouter points, bursting into scores of fragments, scattering in every direction—a flinty hailstorm, that carried death upon its wings."

Anxiously enough the friends watched the rocky avalanche, in readiness to leap either forward or backward, as needs be. It was not long before they saw the reason of their having escaped so long. Though the bowlders were discharged from a point almost directly above them, a peculiar slope in the walls carried the rocks to the right, or between their position and the mouth of the defile. That the savages above also perceived this error in their calculations was evident from their change of position, and the first bowlder thundered down, falling exactly upon the spot where, a moment earlier, Mini Lusa had crouched. But the watchful eye and ready arm of Jack Rabbit saved her from death."

Raising her in his arms like an infant, the young borderer darted aside, so narrowly escaping the falling mass that the accompanying dust and debris powdered him from head to foot."

The peculiar, roaring cry of the dumb scout followed the deafening crash, and then Jack Rabbit felt the maiden lifted from his arms, and saw Tony Chew bearing her up the side of the pocket, as though bent on scaling the perpendicular wall."

Quickly following, Jack soon realized the importance of Chew's discovery. Over a dozen feet above the bottom of the pocket the trio now nestled together in a small crevice or hole in the solid rock. It was as though some giant had buried his enormous ax to its very eye in the rock, then removed the weapon without splintering the stone above or below. In this refuge the hunted trio could surely bid defiance to their enemies. At least while the rocky avalanche continued no Indians could enter the pocket."

"We're worth a dozen dead men yet, old man Tony," said Jack Rabbit, with a long, breath of relief. "Though it *did* look fishy for a spell. Ay! yelp on, you imps of the devil's kitchen! We can laugh at your hailstones here!"

Yet still the heavy bowlders thundered down the sides of the pocket, crashing upon those already accumulated, filling the air with dust and flinty particles. The borderers smiled derisively at this labor in vain of their enemies."

Jack Rabbit turned his attention to Mini Lusa, seeking to distract her gloomy forebodings, to brighten and cheer her up. In this effort he was only partially successful, despite the ardent sentences which his soft voice poured into her not unwilling ear. It was a novel position for love-making—amid the

crashing of descending bowlders, the occasional yell from some savage throat, while the giant borderer stood just before them, a stern, half-digested look upon his rugged features—but Jack Rabbit was not one to throw away even such a chance, when the hot, burning words sprang so freely to his lips. And if Mini Lusa was not convinced of the depth and power of his suddenly-born love, she must have been something more or less than human."

There is an end to all things earthly; so there was to this very agreeable occupation of the young scout. Tony Chew touched him upon the shoulder, then worked his fingers rapidly. His meaning was rendered even more clear as a large, heavy mass of rock crashed down and remained stationary directly before the entrance of their retreat, blocking it half up."

"So—that's their game!" and Jack's brow darkened. "They think to build us in—to bury us beneath their accursed stones. Well, there's only one way for us, unless we can keep the passage clear; to make a break for it, and go under with a grand hurrah, boys!"

Tony Chew made no reply, but contented himself with rolling back a smaller bowlder which had lodged upon the mass of rock. At all hazards the passage must be kept clear."

Yelling exultantly, working with redoubled vigor now that they saw how nearly complete was their task, the Pawnees hurled rock after rock over the walls, encouraged by the loud voice of the Mad Chief."

The two scouts worked desperately, more than once narrowly escaping a terrible death by the descending rocks, rolling back the heavy masses which threatened to wall them in beyond the possibility of escape. Yet, as the rock barricade rose higher and higher around them, the hopes of the brother-scouts grew fainter. Soon it would grow impossible to remove the bowlders—to do anything but remain quiet and await the end. The day was little more than half spent, and though the rocky masses descended less frequently, there was time enough for the Pawnees to securely wall them in long ere the sun should set."

Sternly despairing, the two men ceased their almost superhuman exertions and betook themselves to their rifles, true to the instincts of their craft, wishing to exact the heaviest possible price for their lives. But in this they were fated to be disappointed. Either the savages believed their work completed, had exhausted the supply of loose rocks, or else had been called off from their task by the Mad Chief. Chew did get a single shot—a momentary glimpse of a copper-colored limb, and sent a bullet to feel its texture; but whether successful or not, no sound came to bear evidence."

The hours of the afternoon crept by slowly and heavily enough, broken only by an indistinct, murmuring sound evidently coming from the inclosed valley beyond. Jack, utterly exhausted from loss of sleep and his late unusual labors, now lay at Mini Lusa's feet, sleeping soundly. The giant borderer, like one made of iron instead of flesh and blood, wakeful and vigilant as ever, kept a close watch upon every side, lest the enemy should attempt to steal upon them unawares."

And while thus occupied, a bright glow gradually crept over his bronzed features, his eyes sparkling with pleasure. And indeed he had made a discovery upon which their lives and freedom might depend."

What had bade fair to prove their destruction might accomplish their freedom. Bit by bit he traced it out, and then, fully assured, he aroused Jack Rabbit."

"Look! his fingers nimble spelled. 'The devils, in casting down these rocks, thought to crush us or bury us alive—instead, they have only laid a trail over which we can pass to liberty!'"

The keen-eyed adventurer realized the truth of his friend's remarks. Partly by piling up against the face of the walls, partly by splintering off portions of the rock itself, the bowlders now formed a steep, difficult yet practicable trail by which the pocket might be left."

"Good enough, old man Tony!" joyously cried Jack Rabbit. "We'll live to fool these traveling plague-spots a while longer. It'll be tough climbing—but we can do it. Only—let's more than likely that they have set guards along the ridge."

"That's a risk we must encounter," said the dumb scout's fingers. "Coming from below, we will be apt to see them first, and then—"; a significant motion ended the sentence, perfectly understood by Jack."

It was then growing dusk, and they had not to exercise their patience in waiting very long. And then, cautiously, first keenly scrutinizing every foot of the rocks, they began their toilsome and perilous journey. Tony Chew led the way, following the trail he had already mapped out in his memory. Jack followed, dividing his attention between Mini Lusa and watching for any sign of the sentinels who might and probably were stationed above the pocket."

Foot by foot, yard by yard, they crept on, their progress rendered painfully slow not only by the natural difficulties to be surmounted, but by the knowledge that a single false step, the displacing of a stone, or the clink of a rifle-barrel against the flinty rock might betray them to some watchful savage, who, if he did not pick them off in succession from his perch, would assuredly utter the signal that would bring an overpowering force upon them, when death or captivity—its equivalent—alone could follow."

Then the giant borderer abruptly paused. His keen eye had detected the shadowy outline of a crouching form against the sky beyond, silent and motionless, evidently unsuspecting how near were the fugitives whom he had been placed to guard."

The dumb scout drew his knife and crept forward. Jack and Mini Lusa crouched down, awaiting the result in painful suspense. The minutes rolled on. Would the end never come?"

Then Jack drew a long breath of relief as he saw the shadowy figure of the savage abruptly sink back, and heard the faint sound of the death struggle. So great was his faith in the prowess of his friend that he immediately pressed on, aiding the maiden with tender care. Nor was his confidence misplaced, for the dumb scout awaited them, his face as calm and unmoved as though he had not just cut short the thread of one human life."

The summit of the ridge was near, and Chew gained it without meeting further hindrance. But then a sudden change came over him. For a moment he seemed petrified, but then wheeled and barred the further progress of the young couple. Jack uttered a little cry of wonder as he felt the brawny hands upon his shoulders trembling as though stricken with the ague. But before he could speak, he heard a gasping cry break from the maiden's lips. She had slipped by the scout, and was now kneeling upon the summit, her hands clasped, a look of horror upon her averted face. (To be continued—commenced in No. 306.)

AT THE LAKESIDE.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

At the lakeside I love to wander
And leave my footprints on the sand;
At the lakeside I love to ponder
O'er things the waters idly strand.
Oh, 'tis where I love to muse alone
Mid pebbles, shells and each wave-washed stone.

At the lakeside, on the sandy shore
I sat upon a rock and gazed
Upon the blue waves in silent lore,
When they madly dashed as if crazed,
Then my heart sadly swelled with the waves
As they swept o'er unfortunate graves.

On the lake I saw ships come and go
As they glided o'er the water blue,
Ah, little of their fate did I know,
Little knew each ship's merry crew.
Lake, thy wave music I love to hear
And gaze on thy sparkling water clear.

Foiled.

BY WALTER A. ROSE.

"WHERE do you make her out to be, by dead reckoning, Jack?" asked my father, the master of the American ship Boanerges, as I closed the log-slate with a bang.

"Five, thirteen, north, and thirty-five, eight, west," I replied.

"Guess that's pretty near the mark; I only make us six miles further to the southward and eastward by observation. Let's make it eight bells."

"That schooner has hoisted our flag, sir, union down."

We were standing down toward the southward, being bound to Rio Janeiro, and had been dodging along all morning with a very light breeze. A trim-looking schooner had been in sight some hours, but we had not been able to make fairly out what she was. I was puzzled as to why she had run up a signal of distress, for the sea was smooth, and fine weather had prevailed for several days; but my father told me to bear down for her, as she might be in need of provisions. Long before we came up with the stranger I perceived her to be a yacht, for there was no mistaking her build and trim rig, and, when we hoisted and she hailed us, we learned that she was the *Clytie*, of New York. She sent a boat off to us, and soon a tall, handsome young man, in *recherche* yachting costume, leaped upon our deck. My father welcomed him, and we soon were informed that he was the owner of the *Clytie*, and that aboard that pretty vessel were some of his family, who had been on an extended cruise with him down to the Rio de la Plata and Rio Grande, and that all had come well until about a week previous to our meeting, when, during a severe and sudden squall, the mainboom had knocked the sailing-master and mate overboard, and both of the poor fellows had been drowned.

"You see," continued the stranger, who had introduced himself as Mr. Theodore Thornley, "we have not a soul on board who understands navigation; so, by the advice of the sailors, who are good men, but sadly illiterate, we have been dodging about since the accident, in the hope of falling in with some vessel that had a superintending navigator aboard who could take us into port."

Mr. Thornley concluded by offering such liberal terms for the service that I persuaded my father to promote Mr. Jayne, our second mate, and let me take charge of the *Clytie*. Ere the sun sunk beneath the horizon I was fairly installed sailing-master of the beautiful yacht, and the Boanerges had faded from view in the far distance.

I found that the *Clytie* had sustained very little real damage during the gale in which she had lost her two chief executive officers, and as she was very well found in ship's stores, I had little difficulty in refixing everything shipshape. She was a fine, roomy yacht, a little over two hundred tons, and her saloons were magnificently fitted up, as her owner used her more as a cruiser than a "mug-chaser."

Mr. Thornley introduced me to his party soon after my arrival. It was a small one, but select, being comprised of, first, his wife, a mild, blue-eyed lady, with hardly energy enough to think of anything beyond her diamonds, which, with objectionable taste, she wore at sea, and her dinner, which she enjoyed with a zest not usually observable in an invalid with a multitude of chronic ailments; second, Mrs. Thornley's papa, who was a loud-voiced old sybarite with a port-wine nose and a partiality for pickled oysters; and, thirdly, Mr. Thornley's sister Irene. This young lady was, with the exception of my employer, who was a smart, well-educated and naturally brilliant man, the only one of the party worth recognition—but her attributes made ample amends for what was lacking in the others.

Irene had just passed the barrier of teendom, and had entered the twenties as superb a specimen of a sweet girl as even the most idealistic poet could possibly conceive. She was of medium stature and admirably proportioned, every movement betraying some new grace and charm; her features rayoned one of a clear cut cameo, they were so regular and well defined; her skin was as white as alabaster and smooth as ivory, and the rosy glow of perfect health illumined her dimpled cheeks. Her ripe, luscious lips would have melted the frigid blood of an anchorite, but in her eyes and hair her chief physical beauty seemed to me to lie. Hair that seemed gilded with the glory of the setting sun, not yellow locks, but tresses tinted with the lurid gold that gleams in the opal; eyes dark violets steeped in dew, now flashing with the sunlight of her glorious smile, anon bathed in a sea of holy pensiveness. She afforded a strange contrast to her lackadaisical sister-in-law, and was, in fact, the life and soul of the good ship's company."

In accordance with Mr. Thornley's instructions, I shaped the *Clytie's* course for Barbados, and in about three weeks' time we cast anchor in Carlisle Bay, the harbor of Bridgetown, on the southwest end of the island. As Mrs. Thornley was essentially a fish and a jealous person, she frequently detained her husband aboard the yacht when he might have been enjoying a delightful ramble ashore."

Though his obedience to the wishes of his better-half restrained him from taking his fill of such innocent pleasure, he was determined that his sister should not be cooped up aboard the yacht, so he used often to ask me to take Miss Irene for a ride ashore. Willingly used I to accede to such requests, for I never felt happier than when in the society of the bright and beautiful girl. In the cool of the evening, when the grateful breeze swept over the little isle, we would wander gayly over the undulating lands, beneath the waving foliage of the stately cocoa, dates and cabbage palms, whose curled plumes shot up majestically from their bare

and even columns. Sometimes we rode up the steep slopes of Mount Hillaby, whose base is a garden of gorgeous flowers, and whose pathways are arched by tree-ferns, from the fronds of which trail and droop garlands of convolvuli and festoons of tropical amaranthaceae.

"Who is that gentleman who bowed so deferentially to you, Miss Thornley?" I asked, as we were one day cantering along the high-road, and a dark-skinned, flashily-dressed man in an open barouche saluted *en passant*.

I saw a shade of annoyance flit across the lovely face of my companion.

"The introduced him to me at the Goddards' ball, the other night. His name is Dupre, and he has estates in Martinique. He calls himself a Frenchman, but I think he is a creole. I danced with him twice, and found him to be a conceited bore, though The likes him, and he seems to be popular in Bridgetown," she replied.

I may as well at once confess that I was becoming desperately enamored of Irene Thornley. It was a novel sensation for me, this being in love, and I must say I enjoyed it hugely when in company with the object of my affections; but I felt heart-sick many a night as I lay in my bunk and reflected upon the wide gap there was in social position between my employer's sister—an heiress, at that—and a poor mariner like myself, whose only inheritance would be the old Bonapartes and the little property my father had acquired during a lifetime devoted to the service of Neptune.

"Captain Clifford," said Mr. Thornley, as I met him at the gangway on his return from the shore, when we had been about a fortnight in port. "I've made arrangements to sail tomorrow evening with the land-breeze, for Martinique, as I told you; but a friend of mine wants us, as I did visit, and he'll go with us to Port Royal—his place is somewhere near there."

"All right, sir! Is it Monsieur Dupre who is coming?"

"Yes, it is; and I tell you what, Clifford, I just want to know why that upper lip of yours always curls when you hear him mentioned? Sister is just the same; but I don't take much stock in women's fancies; they always pretend to hate in public the man they adore privately. Do you know anything against Dupre?"

I evaded the question. I did not really know anything about the man; but I hated him instinctively. There was something in the fellow's face that was bad; what, I could not tell; but I am a believer in physiognomy to a certain extent, and also in feminine perspicacity, and I knew from what Irene had hinted sublimely to our first meeting with Dupre that she both disliked and despised him. However, I was the sailing-master of the *Clytie*, not the mentor of my employer, so I took a reef in my tongue and said no more on the subject to him.

Monsieur Dupre came aboard in due time, and a couple of hours after the pretty *Clytie* was dashing the iris-tinted foam from her bows, as she glided out of Carlisle bay, with her flying kites swelling grandly out before the balmy breeze.

"What's the matter with Nellie, Dick? She looks as if something had ruffled her sweet temper," I said to one of the quarter-masters who had been chatting with Miss Thornley's bright-eyed maid, for whom he had a considerable *penchant*, according to rumors current among the crew.

"She's sort of mad about that Johnny Craspe as the old man shipped as passenger inter Bridgetown, sir. She says he ain't no good an' that he's loafin' around after Miss I-reney, who hates him worse nor pizen, so Nell says," replied Dick. "But then, you know, sir, it's kinder difficult to box the compass of a woman's nature, for the pints don't correspond, an' the variation dip o' the needle ain't easy to get a hold on," he added.

I agreed with him; but contented myself with laughing at his logical comparison between the two things sailors swear by, and never pass without looking at—a ship's compass and a pretty girl.

During the four days which elapsed on our passage to Martinique, Dupre never seemed to allow Miss Thornley a moment's peace; he followed her about like a French poodle, and his little wicked eyes seemed everlastingly glowing upon her multifarious charms. He did not like me—that I could plainly see—seeming to know by intuition that I despised him, and he abhorred Dick, because that jolly fat persisted in deluging him with salt water—accidentally, of course—whenever the decks were being washed.

At length we dropped anchor in the harbor of Port Royal, on the south-west side of the island, and our party went ashore to spend a week at the mansion of Monsieur Dupre, who was a sugar and coffee planter, with an estate about six miles out of town. I took a stroll on land the next day, and fell in with some gentlemen I had met on board a Havana steamer I was once mate of. They knew Dupre, and expressed astonishment that the owner of the *Clytie* should have gone to visit him, especially in company with ladies, as they did not hesitate to affirm that the fellow had a very unfavorable reputation and had been ostracized by respectable society on the island. I was not surprised, therefore, when, in three days' time, Mr. Thornley and his party returned to the yacht, and I was instructed to get ready to sail as soon as I could get the vessel properly cleared. My employer, I could see, was about as nearly in a passion as it was possible for him to get, and he did not hesitate to tell me the reason for his sudden return.

"I didn't intend to marry a whole family when I took my wife for better or worse; but I seem to have done it. Bet my bottom dollar that my respectable father-in-law never comes on another cruise with me. He's let that fellow Dupre skin him out of ten thousand dollars at *ecarte*, which I've had to put my name to a bill for, and, on account of this, I am constrained by my wife and her father to continue to be civil to the French puppy, though I am confident he has insulted Irene in some way. She's a girl who possesses good sense, and she would not have begged of me to come back aboard immediately if there had not been something in the wind," he said.

"I'm going ashore this evening to get the ship's papers, sir; perhaps I might meet him, and—"

"Yes, I know, get yourself in a devil of a row with that Quixotic disposition all you sailors have. No, Matilda wants me to continue to be civil to him, and I believe she has asked him to come aboard to say good-by to-night. So we'll say no more about it."

I went ashore before supper, for our regular steward had fallen sick and been taken to the hospital, and we had shipped a mulatto at Barbados whose cooking I did not like, and so I determined to regale myself at the hospitable board of one of my friends. I told Dick to return with the yacht's gig for me at eleven o'clock, got the clearance papers and strolled leisurely to my friend's residence.

We had quite a succession of thunder-storms

during the evening, and the sky seemed a little menacing as I lounged down to the wharf between eleven and twelve o'clock. The gig was waiting for me, and, as I stepped in, I noticed that, with the exception of Dick, she was not manned by her regular crew. I asked Dick how it was.

"That Mooshoo Doopray sent the lads a few bottles of grog for 'ad, an' you can guess how it is, sir—they ain't well. These men don't drink nothing!"

I mentally anathematized the Frenchman for seducing my hands, but thought no more of the matter as we pulled along in the darkness, guided only by the light in the rigging of the *Clytie*, until a sudden flash of lightning revealed a boat pulling across our bows about eighty yards away, and heard a shrill feminine cry rising from it.

"That's my Nell's voice, I'll take my oath, sir. There's suthin' up— You'll see what it is, sir!" ejaculated Dick, bringing the boat's head half-round with a pull so vigorous that it neutralized the effect of the rudder.

Another shriek came and then silence. "Give way with a will, my lads," I cried, and the stalwart fellows bent to their oars and made the light craft skim over the phosphorescent water like a seagull.

Another flash of lightning revealed a small topsail schooner lying at anchor about a mile distant from the *Clytie*, and toward this strange craft the boat we were following was heading. A stern chase is proverbially a long one, but my gig was lighter than the one we were pursuing, and was propelled by stouter and more dexterous arms, and we gained rapidly, though the chased was doing its utmost to get away.

"Stand by to board, my lads, as soon as I sheer into his oars," I whispered, as we raced up alongside. "Rowed all!" I added, and put the tiller over and swept the oars out of the hands of the stranger's crew with the bow of the gig.

I saw two muffled figures lying in the stern-sheets, by the light a pistol-barrel belched forth; saw that the weapon had been aimed at my head, that Dupre's hand held it, and heard a fierce French oath, mingled with my name, rattle from the lips of the sugar-planter. I had no weapon with me, but I caught up one of the stanchions and leveled a blow at the head of the villain who had attempted to take my life. He ducked and the gig lurching as I missed him I fell heavily across the gunwale of his boat. My crew were engaged in a fierce tussle with those of my opponent and did not notice my precarious situation. Dupre planted his foot upon my neck, and, as I squirmed beneath his heel, I saw him draw and upraise a long and murderous-looking dagger that gleamed in the darkness. Another second and ere the weapon could descend upon its cruel errand, a vivid flash from the electrical clouds above blinded me, and in another instant I felt myself in the water. Though half-stunned, the water soon restored my senses, and as I struck upward I caught a woman's dress in my grasp. Winding my arm around the waist of the limp and resistless form, which I instinctively felt was that of Irene, I gained the surface and was immediately drawn into the gig with my burden, by Dick, who had already rescued Nellie from a watery grave. Irene remained insensible and I feared she was dying, though her heart still pulsed. I am afraid I made a fool of myself before the men, judging from a few silly jokes that subsequently were bandied about by the crew of the *Clytie*—but I could not help it. I showered kisses upon the wet lips of the inanimate girl and conjured her in frantic terms to "awake and bless my sight."

"Miss Irene ain't dead, sir. She's been drugged, sir, and I guess all the others on board the *Clytie* have been, too, for I made noise enough when those French devils dragged me away to have roused the seven sleepers," said Nellie, who was sitting upon the same thwart with Dick Surratt—that practical mariner having one arm around her waist and rowing with the other.

When we reached the yacht I found Mr. Thornley, his wife and father-in-law, besides all the members of the crew I had left aboard, in a deathly lethargy, from which they did not arouse until daylight. Irene was the first to recover her senses—she came to while I was showering endearments upon her, Nellie being forward in the gallery making coffee for the gig's crew.

I could not resist the impulse. As she opened her glorious eyes and their wondering gaze met mine, I pressed her to my breast and in my mad paroxysm of rejoicing I poured the story of my love into her ears. She did not repel me, did not scorn to listen to the passionate recital of the affection I bore for her, and, ere my eager tongue grew incoherent with the intoxication of bliss supreme, she sealed chaste kisses on my love-worn lips.

I did not wait for orders from the somnolent owner of the *Clytie*, but hove up the anchor, and sailed out of Port Royal as quickly as possible. When Mr. Thornley revived, the mystery was soon cleared by circumstantial evidence. Dupre had asked to be allowed to present a couple of bottles of grog to the hands forward, and he had "doctored" them, as well as the wine which was drunk in the cabin, *en partant*, Nellie did not taste the "hocus" liquor, and, fortunately, was able to give utterance to the cry which drew our attention to the boat from the schooner, which was evidently chartered or owned by Dupre.

All hands were sick for a few days after we sailed, but, long before we passed the Bahama banks, even the debilitated Mr. Thornley was convalescent and the charming Irene was my promised bride.

My wife brought me a letter from one of my Martinique friends, a few months subsequently, telling me that Dupre's charred body had been found in the bay the night after our departure from Port Royal.

Osceola.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

DURING the long and bloody war waged by the Seminoles for the possession, or, rather, retention of their hunting-grounds in the Florida everglades, the name of OSCEOLA became the synonym for not only all that was wise and daring as a warrior, but for inflexible cruelty as well. There is no doubt but this remarkable man, so far superior in intelligence to his tribe, felt most keenly the great wrong that was being heaped upon his people, and was therefore all the more unrelenting while at war, in his hostility to the whites, and totally immovable in his purposes of revenge when occasion offered.

But, notwithstanding this, Osceola was possessed of very many of the nobler attributes, and was capable of and performed deeds that put to shame, in many cases, his more enlightened and civilized adversaries.

It was during the height of the struggle, and when repeated reverses had rendered the Sem-

inoles unusually ferocious, that the following incident, illustrative of the noble qualities possessed by the great chief, occurred. Some two or three years subsequent to the commencement of the war, a Georgia planter removed from his native State, being forced by pecuniary embarrassments to sell his plantation, and located his new habitation upon a lovely piece of high ground overlooking Charlotte Bay, on the western coast.

The family consisted of Mr. Borden, his wife and one child, a young girl of some fourteen or fifteen years of age, besides whom were three slaves—two men and one woman—who, despite the fact that they might have been free had they so chosen, persisted in following the fortunes of their loved master and mistress, and thereby sharing the hardships and dangers of the new home.

Although much exposed to incursions from the savages, Mr. Borden, by a wonderful piece of good fortune, was left unmolested for a period of nearly three years. As is usually the case under such circumstances, the planter became reckless, or fancied that this order of things would continue; and so, despite the warnings of friends, indeed, of one of the Indian chiefs to whom some member of the family had done a kindness, he persisted in remaining in his new place.

The conflict was raging fiercely around him, almost at his very door—the Indians, as they were driven back step by step into the swamps, becoming even more fierce and determined in their resistance.

At length, so thoroughly aroused did they become, that, for a white man, woman or child to fall into their hands was simply the first step, and a long one, to a horrible death by torture, such as the red man alone knows how to inflict.

The rattle of musketry and the sharper crack of the rifle were often heard by the settlers during the day, while at night the shrill whoop of some prowling savage would uselessly remind the whites of the danger that was hovering near at hand.

Still, time passed, and Mr. Borden continued to plant, rear and gather his crops unmolested.

It was during this time, the height of the struggle, that the family of Mr. Borden had just seated themselves at table for the evening meal, when suddenly, through the open windows, there came the close, sharp rattle of firearms, seemingly in close proximity, and immediately thereafter an Indian warrior, panting from long-continued exertion, and bleeding from a wound in the left breast, bounded into the room.

Casting a rapid glance over his shoulder, as if to note how near at hand his enemies were, he turned to the astonished planter, and in perfect English said:

"I am wounded and pursued. Will you conceal me?"

"I will!" was the response. And, quick as thought, every light in the room was extinguished, leaving it in a state of semi-darkness. "Nellie, my child," continued Mr. Borden, "take the warrior to your room. They will not think to look there. Make haste! here they come!"

A little, soft hand grasped the sinewy one of the warrior, and, leading him from the room, the young girl pointed to a wide stairway, up which she motioned the Indian to mount, she following closely behind.

In her snug little room the maiden concealed her charge behind some articles of clothing hung against the wall, the Indian refusing to get beneath the bed, and then returned to her parents below, just in time to see an officer, accompanied by one whose dress showed him to be a scout, enter through the open window, from the porch—the same, in fact, through which the Indian had bounded.

Stoutly did the planter deny that the fugitive was beneath his roof, or that he had even seen any such person as they described.

A brief search resulted; the ladies' rooms, of course, being exempted, and, consequently, nothing save a waste of time resulted therefrom.

The scout shook his head, and smiled grimly as they left the house to pursue the search in the timber, but he said nothing, and so they disappeared.

The following morning the wounded Indian was totally unable to continue his journey; indeed, to move from the pallet which had been made for him.

On the fifth day, however, he declared his intention of rejoining his tribe, and, despite the earnest entreaties of Mr. Borden and his good wife, he carried out his expressed determination.

Before leaving the house the warrior took from his shoulder, over which it hung, a broad strip of beautifully worked *wampum*, and, dividing it in half with his keen-bladed scalping-knife, he handed one of the pieces to Nellie.

"The white maiden and her parents have saved the life of Osce—a Seminole warrior, and he is grateful. Let her keep this, and when danger is near show it to any of my people, and the danger shall pass away like the summer cloud before the south wind."

Before any one could speak in reply, the Indian wrapped his blanket about his shoulders and strode from the door to the forest near at hand.

Another half-year passed quietly by, at least quietly to the Borden family, but, at the expiration of that time the danger that had so long been hovering over the planter's homestead suddenly burst, all the more terrific from having been delayed so many years.

Deep into the night, long after the little family had retired to rest, the midnight crow of the cock was echoed by the fearful war-whoop of the Seminole braves.

Like shadows they had stolen upon the house, and, after surrounding it, so as to cut off all chance of escape, the signal was given and the attack commenced.

So rapid were the movements of the savages that the planter, taken wholly unawares, was unable to make even the slightest resistance.

The windows, guarded only by shutters of light lattice-work, afforded ready means of entrance, an opportunity that was not likely to be overlooked by experienced warriors.

Sooner than it could be told, Mr. Borden and the entire family were made captives, and led into the forest.

When some distance off the movements of their captors caused them to glance back and the red glare against the western sky, shining luridly above the tree-tops, told them only too plainly what the fate of their new homestead had been.

Strange as it may appear, and to Mr. Borden it was a matter of wonder, no one had yet been harmed.

It had been the custom of the Seminoles on such occasions to slay all but perhaps one or two, who were reserved for torture, but here no one, not even the slaves, had been injured other than in the secure binding to which all were subjected.

Until the sun rose above the forest in the

east and climbed high into the heavens the Indians pushed steadily ahead.

Only once during all this time did the captives have an opportunity of speaking with one another, and then only for an instant.

It was then that Mr. Borden drew near his child, and anxiously asked her if she had the piece of *wampum* that had been given her by the wounded warrior.

The distress of the captives can perhaps be imagined when each learned that the other had it not.

In the sudden surprise the token that would have saved them had been forgotten, and consequently was destroyed with all else in the building which had been fired by the savages. It was a terrible blow, and seemed to leave them without the smallest shadow of hope.

At noon the Indian village, situated in the heart of an immense "glade," and surrounded upon three sides by impassable swamps, was reached.

The reception of the prisoners was of a character but little calculated to relieve their fears. The wildest expressions of delight and savage exultation were indulged in, warriors, squaws and even children participating therein.

A council was immediately held, and by it, the captives, with the exception of Nellie, were condemned to the stake.

In addition, Mr. Borden was, at daylight the following day, to run the gantlet.

At the hour set for this exhibition of cruelty, the inhabitants of the village flocked to the large open space north of the town, and there made all necessary preparations.

Five stakes, separated some twenty or more feet from each other, were driven firmly into the ground.

To one of these Mrs. Borden was lashed, while to the other three the negroes were secured.

The stake designed for Mr. Borden was not to be occupied until the exhibition of running the gantlet had been closed.

From the edge of the village toward the north stretched two long parallel lines of warriors, squaws and young men, all armed with clubs, knives, or heavy switches, and between these, from the further extremity, the doomed man was to pass.

A deathlike silence reigned over all.

Like bronzed statues, the Indians stood awaiting the coming of the head chief, from whence the signal to begin their devilish work must come.

Presently a low murmur announced his coming, and every eye was turned in the direction of the council-house.

As the erect and handsome form of the chief came in view, Mr. Borden, who was held between two warriors, started violently and uttered a slight exclamation.

The sound reached the ear of the chief, who turned quickly about, fixed an earnest look upon the prisoner, and then, with the leap of a startled buck, he reached the white man's side, hurled a warrior right and left, and, with the rapidity of thought, freed the doomed man from his bonds.

"The token! the *wampum*! why have you not shown it to my braves?" asked the chief, rapidly.

The planter explained the loss, and the brow of the Indian grew dark.

"It is bad. My young men are prepared for the torture. They will murmur at having to forego it," said the Indian, in a troubled voice.

It seemed that his fears were not groundless. Murmurs, that rapidly increased to more significant sounds, began to be heard.

They did not understand the delay, and an outbreak was imminent. Leaving the prisoners, who had all been released, under guard of a body of trusted warriors, the chief assembled the remainder around him, and told the story of how these white people had saved his life and nursed him when wounded.

But, even this did not suffice, so great was the hatred toward their common enemy, and so keen the desire of their savage natures to witness the torture.

A conflict seemed inevitable; and the chief, assembling the older braves, prepared for battle.

But, at length, persuasion prevailed; and having once determined to forego their enjoyment, the reaction in favor of the whites ensued, and they were conducted back to the village with all honor.

Under escort of a strong body of warriors, the homeless family was sent to one of the frontier posts, and there given in charge of their friends.

But this was not all.

For several months various articles of value were constantly arriving at the post, presents from the Seminoles to the Borden family, and thus, in time, the planter was enabled to rebuild the homestead that had been burned.

At last the presents ceased, not, however, until the planter's loss had been more than made good, and with the last bale of furs came a piece of white willow bark, upon which was written:

"Osceola never forgets an enemy nor forgets a friend."

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A LITTLE DIFFERENCE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

The poet lives on fancies light,
And dwells in spheres of thought;
He feeds his soul in airy flight
On inspirations caught;
But I prefer the lower wings,
And feed on more substantial things.

The poet quaffs with charmed lips
From old Castalia's fount;
Whose fabled waters bright and clear
Roll down Parnassus' Mount;
I drink from fountains less divine;
The flowing buttermilk is mine!

The poet mounts his Pegasus
And speeds with airy stride
And over fields of fancy takes
His mystic morning ride,
But I have made it quite my rule
To go on foot or hire a mule.

The poet sings in tuneful praise
Of birds of Paradise,
The plumage of whose breast and wings
Is bright with many dyes,
I have no sentiment to waste;
A shanghai rooster suits my taste.

The poet sings of lovely flowers
That in the valleys bloom,
And feels his very soul inspired
In breathing their perfume;
I know a seed of far more power;
Boiled cabbage is my favorite flower.

What if the poet loves to sit
Down to ambrosial feasts,
And at the table of the gods
He revels and is pleased?
In these less mythologic scenes
Give me my dish of pork and beans.

Ay, let the poet strive with song
To win the fabled bays,
Or gain the laurel coronal
Upon his head to place,
I will be satisfied and smile
If I can earn a bran new tile.

The poet strives to win a name
To live for many an age,
Which shall be legibly inscribed
Upon Fame's deathless page,
I ask no more than just the luck
To keep mine from the tailor's book.

Give him the honor and renown;
For these I do not care;
Let Fortune give her golden key
That opens to treasures fair,
I envy not the glittering hoard
If I've enough to pay my board.

How Jack Won a Wife.

THE ROMANCE OF A SLEIGH-RIDE.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THE snow lay spread on the wide-reaching winter landscape like a robe of regal ermine. Above, the sky was blue as any that ever smiled on a June day, and the air that lifted a lone tress of Gussie Winston's brown hair, as she opened the window was refreshingly cold without being pitiless.

A fresh, winsome face it was—pretty Gussie Winston's—framed in by curly brown hair that rebelled against all discipline of ribbon and comb, and that persisted in arranging itself in a style infinitely becoming to the oval face, with its clear, bronzette complexion, cheeks the color of a Mayrose, and eyes as darkly blue as a wood violet.

Altogether, a witching, winsome girl who had the power to make the hearts of the two men who stood beside the glowing fire beat most uproariously, as she turned into the room again, after a very satisfactory view of the weather.

"It's going to be just splendid," she said, joyously, and Wilfred Millingford bent an ardent look upon her—his expressive eyes, dark as a chestnut skin, making not the slightest attempt to veil their admiration.

And very keen admiration it was, too, that had commenced the very first time handsome young Millingford had met Gussie Winston, at a jolly party at Farmer Estabrook's just a month before, where the stylish stranger gentleman, the guest of the Estabrooks, had quite turned the heads of the country lassies—Gussie Winston not excepted, for all the warm, ardent friendship growing up between her and Jack Horton—big, good-looking Jack, with his heart full to overflowing of love for the girl he hoped to make his wife some grand, great day.

This brilliant winter afternoon, with the world flooded in sunshine, the two young men accidentally met at Gussie's house, and each had noted how fair and sweet she was, how sparkling and fascinating, and each had declared the fate should be his own, of taking Gussie's life to theirs.

Mr. Millingford looked ardently at the girl as she spoke of the rarity of the day.

"There could be nothing finer," than the sleigh-ride party will be to-night. Of course you are going, Miss Gussie? And you will give me the honor of being your escort?"

A delighted little flush rushed over her cheeks. Mr. Millingford was so handsome, and gallant, and the girls all dying for him!

"I should be most delighted, thank you, Mr. Millingford."

Jack's quiet, half-pained voice gave her a little start.

"Perhaps you forget, Gussie, you promised me a month ago."

Just the faintest possible tinge of vexation rose in her cheeks.

"Oh, did I? I had forgotten all about it. It was before Mr. Millingford came, wasn't it?"

Ah—there was the secret—"before Mr. Millingford came"—this young city gentleman who had made Gussie's reckless events by his stay among them. Could it be possible he was fated to win his darling from him, under his very eyes?

Perhaps the blank agony of the idea was mirrored on John's face, for Gussie caught a glimpse of it that made her momentarily uneasy; and then, with a slightly perceptible hauteur in her voice, she went on, laughingly:

"I think I shall be obliged to send you two gentlemen home, if I intend to be ready by seven o'clock. You have no idea what lots of things I have to do."

Mr. Millingford took his sealskin cap gracefully.

"I will call at seven-thirty, promptly, Miss Gussie, then?"

Horton had arisen and stood half smiling, half frowning at the girl.

"A promise is sacred, remember, Gussie. You know your duty lies toward me."

Millingford laughed a little conceitedly.

"If it is a question of stern duty, Miss Gussie, I will not attempt to interfere. But if, as I understand, it is a matter of choice, I am perfectly willing to abide by your decision. I will call for you at half past seven, and you can give me the great pleasure or not—as you decide."

He pressed her hand as he bade her good-by and the bright, sudden glow of her dark eyes sent a thrill of pain to Jack's heart, as with a face full of keen anxiety, he looked the good-by he did not say. And Gussie watched them down the road—these lovers of hers, one in all the bravery of his elegant city attire of Astrachan seal-trimmed overcoat and seal cap, set so jauntily over his light, blonde hair that

curled as gracefully as Gussie's own long tresses—stylish, handsome Wilf Millingford, who was the envy of every girl at the countryside.

And at Jack—big, tall Jack, with his heavy, warm Ulster that made no pretension of displaying the really fine figure of the wearer; Jack, with his short-cropped black hair that did show his well-shaped head, over which his soft felt hat was jammed in utter disregard of fashion or becomingness—"good, dear, patient old Jack," she said, kindly, and then, flushed with thrills of pleasure at remembrance of Wilfred Millingford's handsome blue eyes, and the pressure of his white hand.

While that gentleman, walking down the sunshiny country road, with the hard-packed snow crackling crisply under his feet, felt very sure he could win the pretty girl who flushed and drooped her eyes under his ardent glances.

"She's as pretty as a picture, and as sweet as a peach, isn't she, Horton? I declare I am inclined to think a special Providence ordered me to the Estabrooks' for a month, and when I go back it will not be my fault if little Princess Gussie has not consented to be transplanted where her beauty can be appreciated."

Horton plunged his hands deeper into his overcoat pockets, and the scowl on his face grew darker.

"I guess Miss Winston is fully appreciated where she is, and I think she is hardly the sort that cares for transplantation."

Coolly and sarcastically as he said it, there was a heart sinking at the thought, and at the cross-road he left Millingford to go down to the village to the Estabrooks' big house, while he turned his face farmward with a decided pallor of pain on it.

The big, sandy-floored kitchen in the Estabrook farm-house looked cozily delightful, with its huge, crackling fire of logs in the open fireplace, that served for both light and heat to the three or four red-cheeked servant girls who were chattering merrily while the family took their supper in the adjoining dining-room, from which voices, and particularly Mr. Wilfred Millingford's, were plainly audible, as the sleigh-ride was discussed, pro and con.

"To think he had the impudence to ask Miss Gussie, when everybody knows Mr. Horton's waitin' on her!"

Red-cheeked Annie curled her lip with a gesture of ineffable disgust for Mr. Millingford's audacity.

Sarah, grave-eyed and quiet, glanced up from her pan of apples she was deftly paring.

"I am not sure Mr. Millingford is so much to blame. Miss Gussie uses Mr. Jack pretty roughly since our company came—not that I admire Mr. Millingford at all."

Annie laughed contemptuously.

"Admire him! that's good, Sarah! As if there was anybody in the house that did, for that matter! What with his high-rod-mighty orders for 'hot water' when a body's busy with the beds, and a continual grumbling about his cuffs, when, Lord knows, I don't believe he ever saw better done up, let alone wear 'em—well, I don't 'admire' him either."

"And never as much as a civil 'thank you,'" added Sarah, indignantly. "It makes me almost forget my place to see the way Miss Winston cuts Mr. Horton for him. I can hardly stand silently by and know Mr. Millingford is worming himself into her favor."

"Don't you believe it, Sarah! As Tim says, 'I'll bet' on Miss Gussie; she's never going to throw herself away on a fine pair of whiskers—not when there's a gentleman like Mr. Jack ready to come to the fore. Her head's only a little turned—not her heart. I know."

Sarah smiled at the energetic words and manner.

"You're a good defender, Annie. However, it doesn't do credit to your theory that Mr. Millingford will escort Miss Gussie to-night before Mr. Jack's very eyes."

A puzzled frown gathered on the girl's forehead; then, a sudden mischief burst into her eyes and face.

"Well, I don't believe she will go with him, now."

A tap on the little silver call-bell interrupted the girlish gossip of these intelligent, observing maids, and the smile of merriment was still hovering on saucy Annie's face when she went in, in obedience to the summons:

"More bread, Annie; and tell Tim to have the red cutter and the black horse at the door in half an hour, for Mr. Millingford."

Annie took the order and gave it to Tim very demurely; then, while Mr. Millingford was retouching his toilet, went to Sarah—the head of the kitchen corps.

"You promised me I might go to my father's to-night, Sarah. I can go early, can't I? I want to see the sleighing-party go by, and see with my own eyes that Miss Gussie is in a sleigh with that jackanapes up-stairs."

And five minutes before Mr. Millingford came down the piazza steps, with a splendid white robe over his arm, and a pair of seal-skin gloves on his white, aristocratic hands, Annie Austin was scudding down the snow-packed, startled road, with her dark waterproof cloak wrapped about her, the hood drawn cozily around her head, and the chill night-air defrauded of its nipping kisses on her cheeks by the double veil she sensibly wore.

Once she stopped to listen, and the melody of silvery tinkling sleigh-bells—Mr. Estabrook's string—came softly, then louder; and as the dashing little cutter came in sight, she laughed outright.

Gussie Winston was walking restlessly back and forth in the warm, pleasant sitting-room from which, so shortly ago, she had laughingly dismissed her admirers. Now, there were no smiles on her pretty face, and a look, partly of wrath, partly of disappointment, and not a little of mortification was in her eyes as she looked often at the big tall clock ticking so plainly in the room.

Half-past eight—an hour behind time, and Wilfred Millingford not yet come for her! Her cheeks flamed freshly at the thought, and as sleigh after sleigh dashed by with bells all a-gleam, and laughing voices all full of joyous merriment, Gussie grew more and more disgusted and indignant that any escort of hers should dare prove so unparadoxically derelict.

Then came the gay jubilee of loud, musical bells, the frosty crackling of snow under horses' hoofs, and—stopped at the door, and—Jack Horton came in, rosy and very pleasant to see, it seemed to Gussie, just then.

His face was grave, but lighted up at sight of her.

"What—not gone? I could swear I passed you and Millingford three-quarters of an hour ago, on the road."

"Well, you didn't, you see, Jack."

"Where is he, then?"

Gussie flamed up very unaccountably.

"How do I know? As if I wanted to, either—the mean, ungentlemanly fellow he is."

Jack's face grew more luminous.

"Gussie, it may not denote a very high state of charity on my part, but, really, I do enjoy

hearing you talk that way! Get on your things, and I will take you to the party, although I confess I came for your sister Nell."

A little blush surged over Gussie's face.

"Oh, then, you'd better take her, Jack. I wouldn't disappoint you for the world."

He came closer to her, and looked at her eagerly.

"Then tell me you will go with me to-night, Gussie, darling, and as my betrothed wife. Gussie, you know I have loved you so long, so well. Is it yes, dear?"

And, cuddled close beside him, under the warm buffalo robes, Gussie said it was "yes," and knew it was not pique that made her heart so light and happy in Jack Horton's love, although pique had been the blisfully fateful instrument in tearing the scales of infatuation from her eyes.

"Because I have loved you all along, Jack—indeed I have," she said, penitently; "and I don't deserve—"

Galloping horses' feet and the mad ringing of bells interrupted her tender little confession, and Mr. Estabrook's red cutter, with the foaming black horse, came to a sudden standstill, as Millingford and Horton saluted each other.

"If here isn't the most infernal go," Millingford began, angrily. "Here I supposed I picked Miss Gussie up, just by her gate, thinking it a little joke, and when we reached the hotel, who should it be but that black-eyed servant-girl down to the house! I've driven back like mad, you know, although I can't imagine what Miss Winston will think."

A clear, sweet voice thrilled the two men—Gussie's, from among the furry robes.

"Oh, I don't care, Mr. Millingford! Jack and I are having a lovely time, ain't we, Jack? Indeed, I am very thankful to that mischievous Annie, and I'll send her a monstrous piece of wedding-cake; shall I, Jack?"

Mr. Millingford did not venture to the dance that night, and the next day when Annie came home, he was gone for good.

And Annie declares to this day she knew what she was about, and does not grudge her five-mile walk home from the tavern where Millingford left her, to her father's home, when she sees how nice it turned out.

BEYOND.

BY JOHN GOSSIP.

Beyond the deepest darkness the light comes out at last,
And clouds that seemed unending as a dream that holds us fast;
Till the reign of sleep is over, show the coming of the day,
When the gloom of shadowed mountains is at dawn swept away.

Oh, my heart! then cease thy beating;
Let thy errand be the word of me,
There are days of fairer seeming,
Than the dark ones thou weepest o'er—

Days that, however late in advent,
Bring thy treasures of fine gold,
While the finer are for coming,
After suffering tales are told.

And the soul that learns this lesson
While the storm is raging high,
It shall live in perfect sunshine
In the blessed By-and-by!

Raynal Lord's Sacrifice.

BY HENRI MONTCALEM.

IN the summer-house of Judge Lord's elegant country residence, on a summer evening just at the beginning of the war, Raynal Lord stood, half in the moonlight, half in the shade, pleading with his cousin Gabrielle. He was speaking in that low, rich voice, which until now, no woman had ever resisted.

"Gabrielle," he said, sadly, "will you give me no hope?"

And still the girl, with the strange perversity of a born coquette, knowing well that she loved him, tossed her head half scornfully, and answered with a jest. He stood a moment impatiently regarding her; then he spoke again.

"Gabrielle, you must give me my answer to-night, and here."

"Must! By whose authority must I?"

He seized her hand passionately, almost rudely. She snatched it from him with angry force. Then he turned and walked away a moment to hide the emotion that overcame him. Coming back again presently, he said, in a voice no longer musical, but husky and strange: "I will take my answer, even though you refuse it. It is plain to me now that it is Arthur whom you will choose. For your sake, I would to God he loved you as I love you."

Then, without another word, he turned and went out along the path.

In the library Raynal Lord found his brother Arthur. The boy, for he was hardly more than a boy, an undergraduate of eighteen, sat close by the library lamp, and his features were plainly visible. It was a handsome face, certainly; a face to whose charm men and women alike always gave way; yet a selfish, weak face withal, with a settled expression of mingled recklessness and anxiety upon it that seemed strange in one so young. Raynal, entering the open window and catching sight of him, would have gone away again, feeling that just now he could not bear the sight of this brother who had, all their lives long, carelessly pushed him aside, and taken the first place in the affections of his father and mother, and who now was to win from him the only woman he ever cared for. But Arthur was apparently waiting for him, and broke forth at once.

"Well, Ray," he said, "I'm in for it this time, sure enough."

Raynal seated himself wearily. "More money, I suppose. I tell you, Arthur, I can do no more for you. Father will not hear a word from me now. I think he almost hates me. You must go to him yourself. You know he will forgive you anything."

"But it isn't money, exactly, this time, Ray; it's worse than that. The fact is I've been and got us both into an awful fix."

"Go on, I'm prepared to hear that your reckless extravagance has been carried to any extent."

"Ray, you know the draft I gave you the other day to get cashed for me?"

"The one father gave you? Yes, I remember," looking up a little startled.

"Well, I might as well out with it. The fact is—I wrote the old man's name myself; and they've found out the signature wasn't genuine."

Raynal sprang up and came toward the table excitedly.

"And so," he said, slowly, between his set teeth, "you forged the draft and got me to present it for you?"

Arthur covered his face with his hands and did not answer. Raynal went on:

"Arthur, you know how I promised our dying mother that I would always do all I could for you, cost what it might. And you know, too, how I have kept that promise. But I can-

not and will not sacrifice my honor for you, too. There is but one thing to be done; you must go to the governor and tell him the whole story."

Arthur looked up with quite an aggrieved air.

"It's no use, Ray; I never can do that."

"But you see the position you put me in. To-morrow I shall be accused of this thing, and I really think father will be glad to believe it of me. I must tell him myself, if you will not."

"What—you mean to blow on me? I didn't think you would do that. But I swear to you I won't acknowledge it, and the old man will take my word before yours, any time."

Raynal stood looking down upon his brother, stunned and amazed at the ground thus taken. This, then—this man, flushing and cowering beneath his glance, yet willing to sacrifice his own brother and best friend to his own selfish fears—this was the brother whom he had shielded and suffered for all his life, and who now was to take Gabrielle from him—Gabrielle and his honor too. He sat down, buried his head in his arms, and groaned aloud. Then a sudden resolve seized him. Why should he stay here longer? He was nothing to Gabrielle, his father disliked and distrusted him, his home was unworthy a single thought. Home was no longer home to him. He had at least health and strength, and a clear conscience. He would not stay to be denounced as a forger. In the rank and file of the great army that was marching south he could forget and be forgotten. There, at least, was the excitement he craved, and the death which he no longer dreaded. He rose and went and stood a moment before his mother's picture.

He had always worshipped her, and she, in a certain way, had been fond of him, only he was always second to Arthur. Well, what mattered it? After all, in going away now, was he not keeping his promise to her to sacrifice all for his brother's sake? He did not speak to Arthur again, nor look at him. Carefully stepping over the old Newfoundland that lay on the rug before the door, he turned a moment to give the dog a parting caress, then strode away out into the night and into the world.

The war was ended and done. It was three years now since the final surrender. The seventh summer had come and gone again since that far-away summer when Raynal Lord had turned away, an outcast from his father's house; and now the autumn leaves were falling. A man, still young and full of strength and vigor, stood leaning on a barway at the roadside, a kind of central figure in the October landscape. His dress was not elegant nor stylishly cut, yet it could not hide the splendidly-developed figure and soldierly bearing, nor could the full black beard and slouched hat entirely conceal a handsome face bronzed with exposure. The man somehow appeared to be foreign to the place and scene. His dress and general appearance seemed to mark rather a denizen of prairie wastes, who, coming back to civilization once more, had carelessly assumed its least conventional garb. Yet a man evidently a bred gentleman, anywhere and in whatever dress.

This man was Raynal Lord, once again after long years of exile and adventure drawn by an irresistible longing back to his childhood's home. "I would like to see it once more," he had said to himself; "maybe, unknown to them I shall look upon their faces—at least I would like to see if Gabrielle has grown more beautiful, and if my father is older now. Arthur, of course, takes life as easy as ever. I would only see them—I would speak no word and make no sign. Then I would come back to my mountain life and never quit it again."

So now he stood gazing upon the familiar scenes of old, striving to prepare himself to go down among them as a stranger.

A horse and rider were coming down the road at a slow canter. Raynal turned suddenly to see, and at the same time the horse coming upon him suddenly from round the curve at the hill-top, shied violently and threw his rider, a gray haired old man, with considerable force against the stone-wall. The frightened horse started off swiftly down the hill. Raynal had recognized the fallen man instantly, bent and aged though he was by the years that had passed since they had met. He sprang forward with a loud cry as he saw his father fall, and in a moment, scarcely knowing what he did, he was supporting the insensible old man upon his breast and pressing his lips to the cold forehead. Almost immediately a wagon came along and with the aid of the farmer who drove it, Judge Lord was carefully raised, laid on a blanket within it, and driven slowly down to the house.

Gabrielle was at the open door waiting as they drove up. The riderless horse, galloping into the stable, had prepared her to expect some accident. Raynal looked at her now as she stood there, pale but calm and collected. No, she had changed but little—the same beautiful Gabrielle, only somehow grown graver and prouder and colder.

"Poor Gabrielle," he thought to himself even in that moment, "maybe now she has married Arthur, she knows too late how unworthy he was of her."

"Now, Miss Fanshawe," said the rough farmer, "git the room ready so we kin lay him right on the bed."

Raynal heard the words and stood still a moment quite stunned.

"Miss Fanshawe!" Then she had not married Arthur after all! A wild, unreasoning hope shot through his brain. Her voice recalled him to himself.

"His room is all ready, Mr. Timms, if you (this to a servant who had just come up) send me my horse and go for the doctor at once."

Seemed to comprehend everything and take all necessary steps without explanation or assistance.

Tenderly they placed the old man on the bed, where he lay in a deathlike stupor, moaning feebly now and then but giving scarcely any other signs of life. All ordinary restoratives seemed ineffectual. Raynal examined his injuries and inquired how long before the doctor might be expected. Gabrielle answered mechanically that he lived some miles away and possibly might be away from home.

"But, something should be done at once," persisted Raynal, anxiously. "I am somewhat of a surgeon myself; I saw a great deal of it in the army. His head is very severely bruised and cut and his arm is broken. I think I understand what should be done. Will you have cold water and bandages brought at once?" and coolly and as one having a right, Raynal assumed charge of the injured man while the other gladly obeyed him. Skillfully he bathed and bandaged the wounds about the head and arranged the fractured arm so that the sick man seemed much easier than at first; and when at nightfall the physician arrived, that functionary expressed himself as perfectly satisfied with what had been done. He shook his head, however, when they spoke of the patient's recovery. The old man

had long been more feeble than they supposed. The shock of Arthur's death had shattered his nervous system completely and he would hardly have vitality enough to bring him through now. They might hope for the best, however.

Raynal listed to these words like a man in a dream. Arthur dead! He felt a sudden pang. After all, this was his only brother, the brother whom he had petted and helped to spoil.

When the doctor went away again Raynal still remained by his father's bedside. "You will let me stay with him," he had begged of Gabrielle. "I have a peculiar right—he was a good friend to me in my boyhood." Gabrielle's searching gray eyes looked straight into his for a moment but she expressed no surprise. She only said simply, "It is just what I would have asked. We can never thank you for all you have done."

And so through all the long night those two remained silent and unwearied by the sick man's side, for Gabrielle refused to go away. And Raynal, sitting there in the shadow at the foot of the bed, while the old man tossed about in the delirium of a brain fever, slowly gathered from his ravings the terrible tragedy that had been enacted during his absence. Poor Arthur! One might have predicted it from the first, perhaps. Again and again did his indulgent father free him from debt, but he had gone on from bad to worse, and one day it was discovered he had forged his father's name for a large amount, and that same night, going to his chamber, they found him lying on the bed shot dead by his own guilty hand. On the table was a note confessing his crime, and confessing, too, that crime of long ago for which his brother had suffered exile. It was pitiful to listen to the poor old man as he went over all this, again and again, in delirium, sobbing and weeping in his weakness as though his heart would break. And often his thoughts would change and he would name the name of his other son, his bonny Raynal whom he had so wronged; and he would call out to him piteously to come back once more and forgive his poor old father before he died. And that son sat there with face buried in his hands through all the night and listened to it all, listened and made no sign.

In the morning the doctor came again. The patient was more quiet now—indeed, seemed almost rational as they stood about him; but the physician gave them less hope than before. The change had come sooner than he expected, he said; the old man could scarcely live an hour. Suddenly the sick man opened his eyes, and glancing around upon them all with an expectant look, said, querulously:

"Where is Raynal? I thought Raynal was here."

Moved by an impulse he could not resist, Raynal came forward, unnoticed, and took the feeble hand in his. The dying man started almost upright to clasp him.

"Ah, Raynal," he cried, exultingly, "I knew you would come back. I know all now, know how nobly you acted. Would to God I had not been so blind!"

"He thinks you are his absent son," explained the physician.

"Let him think so a little, then," answered Raynal, the tears streaming from his eyes. "It will do no harm, and it comforts him." And he still stood there, while his father clung tightly to his hand. Once more the old man called him:

"Raynal, Raynal—kiss me once, Raynal. We know each other now, as we never did in the old days. And, Raynal, be good to Gabrielle, for she—loved—you." And with these words, slowly and feebly uttered, yet, at that moment, inexpressibly dear to him to whom they were addressed, the weary head fell back upon the pillow, and the failing eyes closed in their final sleep.

Three days later, just after the return from the funeral, according to custom, the relatives and immediate friends of the deceased assembled in the great parlor to listen to the will. Its provisions were very simple. After numerous smaller bequests, the whole rest and residue of the Lord property, amounting to some three hundred thousand dollars, was to be divided in the proportion of two-thirds to the one, and one-third to the other, between his son Raynal and his niece Gabrielle. And here followed a singular clause to the effect that the old man, knowing that these two had loved each other in the past, sincerely hoped that they would consider his dying wish that the property might be kept together by their marriage. If Raynal should be proved dead, then all was to go to Gabrielle.

There was profound silence as the lawyer finished and looked around, a silence which he at length broke by asking if any one present could tellught of Raynal Lord's whereabouts. Raynal himself stood apart from the rest, with folded arms and head bowed down. At the lawyer's words, he lifted his eyes for an instant and met those of his cousin bent upon him, cold and haughty, it seemed to